

Anatoli Butenko

THEORY AND PRACTICE

**OF REAL
SOCIALISM**

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FROM THE PUBLISHERS

- What is real socialism?
- Are different models and forms of socialism recognised in Marxism?
- How does real socialism differ from “democratic socialism”?
- Is there a democratic way to socialism?

These are only some of the questions sent in by foreign readers to Novosti Press Agency. This book supplies the answers to them. The author, Professor Anatoli Butenko, does not shy away from vexed questions raised by supporters of socialism as well as by its opponents. Topics which are still the subject of debate among Communists in different countries are also given their fair share of attention.

All the questions and answers are arranged in strict logical order. First the author deals with the problems associated with the substance of real socialism, next focussing the reader's attention on its political and economic foundations and stages of development as well as on the achievement of the ideals of social justice and equality. The concluding part is devoted to the international aspects of real socialism, the nature and structure of the world socialist system, and the character of the socialist countries' foreign policy.

Thus this book gives an account of the main aspects of real socialism. The Publishers hope that it will make many things clear for those who sincerely wish to understand the complex developments of the present, and that it will be of help to those who are directly involved in the struggle for democracy and socialism.

What does the concept of real socialism mean? How are the concepts of socialism, scientific socialism and real socialism related?

On the face of it, the use of the term "real socialism" may seem unjustified, as the social system which was established in the Soviet Union in the latter half of the 1930s, and in the PRB, the HPR, the GDR, and the CSSR at the turn of the 1960s, is a socialist system and so can appropriately be described by the long-standing term "socialism". This is beyond argument. There is, nevertheless, every reason for the emergence of the concept of real socialism.

Human thought has always reacted keenly to changes in society, looking for, and finding, suitable terms for them which would help to express the substance of those changes. With the emergence of Marxism, the social sciences acquired a scientific basis. The concepts of slavery, feudalism, capitalism and communism were scientifically explained. Today, as new social processes develop and new phenomena emerge, new terms, concepts and categories appear in Marxist science. One of these new concepts mentioned increasingly in recent

political and scientific literature is the concept of real socialism.

What does this concept mean?

Real socialism is a social system which is the practical embodiment of the scientific doctrine of socialism. It has taken root and is developing in the countries which belong to the world socialist system. Essentially, it is a social system in which capitalism and the precapitalist patterns of production are replaced in a revolutionary way; it is a system of industrial, social and political, cultural and ideological conditions and relations which conform to the vital interests of the working people and man's changed status in society.

Let us look at the distinctive features of this system.

In the *economic* field, they are the socialist mode of production, ruling out the exploitation of man by man, two main kinds of socialist property: state and co-operative property, and an industrially developed material and technical base. In the *social and political field*, they are government by the working people led by the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party, an absence of class antagonisms, and the existence of the working class, the peasantry in collective farms and the intellectuals, all having a uniform socialist nature. In the field of *consciousness*, they are a single Marxist-Leninist ideology, the ever broader assimilation of the major cultural and scientific achievements by the masses, and the affirmation of the spirit of collectivism and of the new ethical ideals.

With the growth of the revolutionary workers' movement, the concept of *socialism*, which is one of the key concepts in Marxism-Leninism, comes to

have an increasingly wider meaning. Before the 1917 October Revolution in Russia, it denoted the doctrine of the future social system (Marx and Engels founded *scientific socialism* which differed from the *Utopian socialism* of their predecessors; simultaneously, Marx and Engels wrote about *petty-bourgeois*, *bourgeois* and *feudal socialism*). Further, it denoted the future—then still non-existent—social system (socialism as the first phase of *communism*) and the revolutionary labour movement (the socialist movement, revolutionary socialism, and so on).

After the victorious October Socialist Revolution, socialism began to be implemented. Lenin wrote that the tasks that had previously been raised “abstractly, theoretically”, would now be taken up “in a practical manner.” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 413.) Once the ideas of scientific communism began to be carried into practice, the concept of socialism came also to denote the *real* gains of socialism, as in the “substructure of socialism”, “base of socialism”, “foundations of socialism” (or “socialism built in the main”), “developed socialism”, “mature socialism”, and so on.

As socialism moved out beyond the limits of one country and became a world system, the concept of socialism became broader still. The new concept of socialism as a world system had appeared, implying the new social and historical phenomenon—the association of all socialist countries.

Another thing to be borne in mind is that the concept socialism is widely used not only by Marxists, but also by social reformists and revisionists (“democratic socialism”, “humane socialism”, “so-

cialism with a human face", etc.) as well as by revolutionary democrats and other political leaders ("African socialism", "Arab socialism", etc.). Today the socialist label is fastened, as often as not, to widely diverging processes and social phenomena. Some of these are invested with a definite progressive social and economic content ("Indian socialism"), others are as different from socialism as chalk from cheese ("Swedish socialism"), while still others are mere distortions ("barracks socialism").

Therefore, the new concept of real socialism acquires a definite meaning. Obviously it is not concerned with a theory, but with the tangible social system that has taken shape and is developing in the countries of the world socialist system, with all its common features and daily problems. As to the latter, it should be remembered that some features of real socialism—the existence of two forms of socialist property and of two classes, the workers and the peasants, or the contemporary pattern of the national economic complex—are not obligatory features of socialism. In countries where there is no peasant class, socialism with one form of socialist property, with some other social structure, etc., is possible. But for real socialism, the specific features it has are of great significance.

One may conclude from the above that it would be wrong to set the concepts of socialism, scientific socialism, and real socialism in opposition to each other since real socialism has emerged out of the putting into practice of the ideas of scientific socialism. The concept of real socialism also has a distinct ideological aspect, as it stresses the actuality of the socialist system and the specific nature

of its problems, separating actual socialism from pseudosocialism.

The 20th century, in which we live, is the age of the confirmation and growth of real socialism, which is the new social system superseding capitalism. Whereas at the start of the century capitalism still held undivided sway, in 1917, after the victorious October Socialist Revolution, it lost the vast country of Soviet Russia, with an area covering a sixth of the globe and inhabited by 7.8 per cent of the world's population. Before the Second World War, its population was already nine per cent of the world's population and it turned out about ten per cent of world industrial output. After victorious socialist revolutions, following the war, in a number of countries of Europe and Asia, socialism became a world system. By 1955, the socialist countries occupied 26 per cent of the territory of the globe. Their share of the world population amounted to 35 per cent, and of world industrial output, to about 27 per cent.

The socialist countries who are members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) are developing most successfully and dynamically. Their economic growth rates have been much higher—and they continue to be so—than those of the capitalist countries. To illustrate, over 25 years, 1951-1976, the average annual increase in industrial output in the USSR and other socialist community countries was more than twice that in developed capitalist countries, being 10 and 4.6 per cent respectively. In 1971-1975, the average annual increase in industrial output was 8 per cent in the socialist countries, 1.7 per cent in the developed capitalist countries, and merely 1.4 per cent in

the European Economic Community (Common Market) countries. Taking the 1970 level as 100 per cent, in 1981 the national income produced doubled (206 per cent) in Bulgaria, increased more than 1.5 times (166 per cent) in Hungary, 1.2 times (122 per cent) in Vietnam, more than 1.5 times (167 per cent) in the German Democratic Republic; gross industrial output increased 1.8 times (180 per cent) in Cuba, the national income produced almost doubled (196 per cent) in the Mongolian People's Republic, increased almost 2.5 times (247 per cent) in Romania, more than 1.5 times in the Soviet Union and in Czechoslovakia (168 and 156 per cent respectively), dropping only in Poland.

Are different models and forms of socialism recognised in Marxism?

This question arises precisely because socialism today is not just a doctrine or a scientific prediction, but a reality in a number of countries which are not at all alike. What is the correlation between the general, the particular, and the individual in Marxist theory and practice?

Bourgeois theoreticians, who react sensitively to discussions, including those among Communists, assert that there is no integral and conclusive theory offering a scientific forecast, a single conception of socialism. This theory has allegedly been replaced by various social reformist conceptions and "local interpretations" of Marxism, such as Leninism-Stalinism in the Soviet Union, Maoism in China, Titoism in Yugoslavia, and other local *isms*

in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Albania, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cuba, West European countries and Japan. Each of these conceptions or "local theories" expounds, in their view, its own idea of socialist development, its own socialist model, only those being praiseworthy which allow more free play for the economic and political forces and in which there is more "Western liberalism", more anti-Sovietism, and less "orthodox Marxism-Leninism".

In other words, according to bourgeois writers, both Marxism and socialism today are pluralist, of a variety of types, while the Soviet Communists do not want to reckon with this theoretical and practical plurality and continue to try to give socialism everywhere the same face, modelled on the "Soviet original".

Two alternative recommendations and a very definite purpose show through this line of thought. The Communists should either recognise the "pluralist" character of Marxism and socialism or, conversely, have all the countries slavishly copy one model. In the former case, the purpose is to open the way to a denial of the universal character of Marxism-Leninism, to an acceptance of "local Marxisms", to a vindication of "local", "liberal", "market" and other "socialisms". In the latter case, the purpose is to get the Communists to proclaim their absolute disregard of local conditions in individual countries, which must result in the failure of socialist development and, therefore, in a revival of nationalist elements and anti-Soviet sentiments. It has long been known that the latter are encouraged under the pretext of fighting the "dogmatic copying of Soviet experience".

This alternative is far-fetched. Marxism-Leninism rejects equally plurality in socialist theory and practice and a nihilistic attitude to national differences. As a general, internationalist doctrine of the emancipation struggle of the workers and all the working people, Marxism-Leninism is not a dogma but a guide to action. Therefore it has to take into consideration all the specific aspects of development in each country.

Social development is a complex and many-sided process. This process is not only dependent on the *general* social and economic conditions repeated from country to country and giving rise to common development features; it also stems from highly *specific*—objective and subjective, domestic and international—circumstances, concrete situations in the alignment of the class forces, individual features peculiar to separate countries and nations. Lenin wrote that different nations advance “in the same historical direction, but by very different zigzags and bypaths.” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 195.) Neither the transition to socialism nor socialism itself abolish this natural diversity of conditions. Each country’s road to socialism is a blend of the *general*, the *particular*, and the *individual*. It is a process which involves mainly the general laws governing development in all countries, as well as the particular, distinctive ways in which these laws may be applied. Taken together, this presents the specific type of socialist development in a given country.

As they examine and interpret the results and prospects of their countries’ development, Communists in each country enrich the *general*, *common* theory. They identify the limits within which its

separate conclusions are applicable, ridding it of outdated formulas and conclusions and supplementing it with new ones. New *isms* emerge only where and when the solid foundations of the science of Marxism, its *principles*, tested and proved in practice, are revised. That, however, is no longer a matter of carrying forward or applying scientific communism, but rather of falsifying it, producing conceptions that have nothing to do either with science or with the genuine interests of the workers. This is a case, not of Marxism-Leninism breaking down, but of unstable elements dropping out of the revolutionary workers' movement.

On the subject of the scientific modelling of socialist development, which is designed to create the picture, the model of socialism, Marxist-Leninists maintain—as they have always maintained—that there is only one *scientific model of socialism*, common to all countries. It is the logical conception of socialist society, shared by all Marxist-Leninists, produced on the basis of the knowledge of the objective laws to which the transformation of capitalism into socialism is subject, and containing the key characteristics of the new society, showing its main features. The *general model of socialism* is a logical inference from the *general theory of socialism*. It provides the basic outlines for a concrete programme of action.

The conceptions of the first phase of communism, held by Marx, Engels and Lenin, contain the scientific anticipation of future socialism. That the Marxist-Leninist definitions of socialism are correct, scientifically-based and universal, has already been proved in practice. All other models of socialism, like "market socialism" or supraclass "pure

democracy" or "third-path socialism" are unsound precisely because they fly in the face of these definitions and experience and lie outside the domain of scientific communism. They have just been copied from bourgeois and petty-bourgeois writers, and if they indicate a path at all, it certainly does not lead to real socialism.

The general model of socialism, founded on Marxism-Leninism, which has been tested and proved, outlines the most typical features and principal characteristics of the new society and shows that it is a society in which there are no exploiters, the means of production are socially owned, all able-bodied citizens are obliged to work, distribution of products of labour is according to the work done, government is democratic, the Marxist-Leninist party plays the leading role, and so on. Although the general model of socialism does not give a precise picture of what the specific features of socialist society should be in a given country, it is not immutable. As theoretical studies continue and relevant experience is accumulated, the model becomes richer in content, covering more and more general characteristics of socialism as such.

Does this mean that, as they draw general conclusions from the struggle being waged in the specific conditions of each individual country, Marxist-Leninists do not have to define concretely, in their policy documents, the single Marxist model of socialism or evolve a more detailed scientific idea of the socialist society they are going to build in their country?

Certainly not. It is absolutely necessary to look for specific ways of building socialism, for specific patterns of its organisation in a given country, and

it is equally necessary for each Communist party to conduct independent theoretical studies and produce a programme of its own. Marx said long ago, in his work *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, that many of the programme points had no significance outside Germany. Spain, Russia, Britain and America had programmes of their own, allowing for the special difficulties in each of those countries. The single point of similarity between the programmes, he said, was the identity of their ultimate goal.

The general model of socialism is, after all, a logical abstraction containing a scientific generalisation of international practice, and the theoretical prediction of the main contours of the socialist system in different countries. Speaking of the Marxist concept of the socialist society to come, Lenin pointed out that "this new society is ... an abstraction which can come into being only by passing through a series of varied, imperfect concrete attempts to create this or that socialist state." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 341.) Hence, the general model of socialism should be detailed enough to cover conditions in different countries and to become an individualised, *specific* model.

The *specific model of socialism* presented in the policy documents of each Communist party is drawn up on the basis of the creative development of the uniform Marxist-Leninist doctrine. *Rabotničesko Delo* (Workers' Cause), the organ of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, wrote on September 22, 1968: "With the general model of socialism as the basis, each Communist party works out a specific theoretical model (a programme) which allows for specific national and other objective and subjective circumstances.

These specific realisations of the general model of socialism are identical on the main points and differ on the secondary ones." As is known, the 10th BCP Congress approved a programme for building a developed socialist society in Bulgaria, which took account of both the general and the specific features of socialist development in the country.

As the single general model of socialism is made specific with regard to each country's circumstances, in the process of its realisation socialism acquires its own *form* in each country.

The form of socialism is the inner organisation, derived from uniform features and principles, of socialist society in a country with its distinctive features of material production, specific structure of social—above all, economic and socio-political—relations, its characteristic system of national economic management and methods of economic development, the forms of its political organisation, the features of the social psychology, culture, way of life, and so on.

Indeed, it is enough to compare the conditions of social life in Hungary and the German Democratic Republic, in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria, to notice the differences in the forms in which socialism is being realised. It is perfectly obvious that the patterns of material production in Hungary and the GDR are not the same. A different degree of importance is attached to small-scale and private production in these countries. The systems of economic management and forms of political organisation also differ a good deal. Hungary has a single-party and Bulgaria has a two-party system, and the GDR and Czechoslovakia have multiparty systems. The organisation of the highest bodies of

state authority also varies. So do the social attitudes, culture and ways of life in each of these countries.

It should at the same time be stressed that the forms of production and economic management, the forms of political organisation, the features of social psychology and everyday life, etc., specific to each country, are intrinsically related. Their interaction is apparent in the originality of each country's development, an originality which does not clash with the features and principles common to all socialist countries.

What are "deformations of socialism" and where do they spring from?

We have already mentioned that the concept of socialism should be compared with the reality which, although sometimes declared to be socialist, may not be so in fact. Some writers describe the social systems in Sweden and other countries as "Scandinavian" socialism, and so forth, but Marxists would hardly agree that this is real socialism. But we are concerned with more than this. Even in the socialist world, i.e. where the exploiters' rule has been overthrown, the declared principles have sometimes been plainly at variance with the facts. Suffice it to recall, for example, the realities of Maoist China, Pol Pot's Kampuchea, the miscalculations and errors made in Hungary in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1967-68 and in Poland in 1980-82.

In other words, the history of real socialism is not a story of total achievement and success. It is the life of the new society in all its manifestations,

including historic gains and reverses, shortcomings and problems still waiting to be solved.

Facts must be taken for what they are. But one needs more than that to be able to give a scientifically valid and convincing answer to the question of what the reality of life was in Maoist China and what it was in Pol Pot's Kampuchea.

Communist party documents have of late been referring to "*deformations of socialism*". In the 1960s, they were mentioned in the documents of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. In connection with the political and economic crisis in 1980-82 in Poland, the 6th Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party appealed for guarantees to be found to "rule out in the future any deformation of social and economic policy and the emergence of crises." Wojciech Jaruzelski, First Secretary of the PUWP Central Committee, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, told a session of the Polish *sejm* of the government's determination to "fight the deformations which appeared in the past, call to account the perpetrators of evil, and prevent all manifestations of dishonesty and all that runs counter to socialist ideology".

So what is deformation of socialism?

Deformation of socialism is a development alien to the nature of socialism which may occur when the new society is being built, if its principles are twisted and the very essence of socialism distorted. It occurs when other principles and methods are substituted for the principles of socialism and socialist methods of the operation and development of certain aspects of social life. When, for example, the public ownership of the means of produc-

tion is replaced by state bureaucracy or group ownership alienated from the people; when planned development is replaced by uncontrolled development; when democratic centralism is replaced by bureaucratic or anarchic centralism; when the two-way relationship between government and the governed from the bottom up and from the top down is replaced by a one-way relationship of command from the top only; when government by the people and for the people is replaced by rule in the name, but not in the interests, of the people, and so on.

Stemming as it does from the distortion in practice of the very principles of the new society, deformation of socialism is a real social evil which does untold harm to the interests of the working people, to the cause of socialism. One instance of this is Maoist China's negative experience. The 26th CPSU Congress noted that the "experience of the social and economic development of the PRC over the past twenty years is a painful lesson which shows what any distortion of the principles and substance of socialism in home and foreign policy leads to."

Deformation of socialism is a very dangerous evil because, while it emerges as a result of the distortion in practice of the principles of socialism, it is represented as the practical embodiment of Marxism-Leninism, thereby discrediting both Marxism-Leninism and socialism. This was precisely the way in which reality, including the distortions of the period of the so-called cultural revolution, was presented in Maoist China. By present-day estimates, during the "cultural revolution" in China more than ten million persons were arrested or killed,

the revolution affecting altogether 200 million citizens. "The present Chinese leaders themselves," the 26th CPSU Congress pointed out, "have described what happened in the period of the so-called cultural revolution in their country as 'a most cruel feudal-fascist dictatorship'. We have nothing to add to this assessment."

The particular danger of these deformations lies in the replacement of structures and mechanisms characteristic of socialism by *different* structures and mechanisms, which involves a reconstruction, with certain elements of degradation, of the existing social relations themselves, which gradually lose genuine socialist features.

Finally, owing to these alterations, the advantages of socialism are lost in one field or another, the development of society is disrupted and increasingly inhibited. The mechanism that becomes established and people's social relationships, distorted by it, run counter to the nature of socialism and affect ever more gravely the nerve centres of the entire social organism, making it impossible for the workers' ideals and vital interests to be realised.

It is not simply a question of the consequences of errors, of an erroneous conception of the nature of socialism and of the laws governing its development. Should the causes of deformations of socialism lie merely in theoretical errors, in ignorance, these would be removed by the socialist movement before the deformations had time to form and strike root. In fact, they spring from social causes that lie deeper than that. Their emergence and establishment are due to certain group interests; the preservation and entrenchment of the emerging deformations are advocated by certain, usually fairly in-

fluent, social elements, such as the Maoist party and government bureaucrats, people promoted by the cultural revolution in Maoist China, or the sections and groups in Poland standing to profit from the deformation, often those who do well out of the difficulties experienced in the economy of scarcity, corrupt government officials, etc.

Therefore, to bring to light and eradicate a deformation of socialism it is not enough to see it and acknowledge the fact. It takes a force, a social force capable of breaking the resistance of the groups supporting it and of firmly establishing the necessary mechanism in the place of the deformed one.

One characteristic feature of an emerging or an already entrenched deformation of socialism is commonly an absence of any visible departures from the fundamental principles of the new social system. Social (state and co-operative) ownership is maintained, the government still claims to speak on behalf of the people, the party professing its adherence to Marxism-Leninism plays the leading role, and so on, and so forth.

But real socialism is not just apparent conformity to the ideas of scientific socialism. It is a social system which embodies the workers' ideals and actually *serves the interests of all working people*. When, however, the social institutions—ownership, power, scientific ideology, etc.—of real socialism are retained but filled with a different meaning, so that the established system serves the workers' interests no longer but, on the contrary, harms these interests, serving the selfish aims of other, fairly small social groups—when all this happens, then the indications are that this system, still

known as socialist, is in fact losing the real socialist features and turning into deformed socialism, a social structure which, though the usual forms of exploitation of man by man may be strange to it, is stamped by inequality, injustice and oppression of man by man, and so increasingly forfeits its claim to be called real socialism.

What is the difference between the so-called democratic socialism and real socialism?

To repeat, real socialism is the realisation of the scientific socialism of Marx, Engels and Lenin. As for the concept of "democratic socialism", it is a social-reformist, not a Marxist, concept, put forward by social-democratic leaders and theoreticians, not by Communists. The former admit that there is no generally accepted definition of "democratic socialism". Even so, one can isolate from the numerous shades of opinion and the variety of stand-points the characteristics of democratic socialism which are usually given the most prominence. These are: the existence of a private and a public sector in the economy, full employment, general welfare, democracy for all, a high cultural level for everybody. Simultaneously it is claimed that a society like this can be attained through a gradual, peaceful "transformation of capitalism" within the framework of bourgeois democracy, eschewing a revolution and without establishing workers' power.

Although Social Reformists have been in power for decades in many countries, they have still failed to change capitalism into socialism, to remove the exploitation of man by man. The chief difference between "democratic" and real socialism lies

in the fact that under the former the promised socialism fails to materialise. Nevertheless, their programme or model of socialism serves the Social Democrats as an important means of getting—by way of all sorts of compromises and deals with the bourgeoisie and its ruling circles—concessions, reforms, essential or inessential improvement in the position of the masses on whose behalf they continually reform society towards “democratic socialism”. In the process, however, the foundations of capitalism are left absolutely intact and no socialism is actually established.

What are the basic stages of socialist development? What is the “period of transition from capitalism to socialism”? When does it end?

The experience of socialist development in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries bears out the truth of the prediction made by Marx, Engels and Lenin that the formation and development of the new social system must involve (1) *a period of transition from capitalism to socialism*, (2) *socialism as the first phase of the new society*, and (3) *communism as its higher phase*. At the same time, thanks to the experience acquired, the original Marxist ideas of the stages of socialist development have been made more precise. This experience has shown, above all, that socialism is not a brief transitional period but a comparatively long phase of social and economic development comprising at least two stages, the first of them being the stage at which developed socialism is built and the second being the stage at which de-

veloped socialist society exists and undergoes improvement.

While the socialist revolution occurs in a capitalist country, socialist construction starts with the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie, the exploiters, and with the establishment of the power of the working class and its allies. A victorious socialist revolution in the political field, however, does not introduce socialism as a fully shaped social system; it launches a *period of transition from capitalism to socialism*. Capitalist society cannot be changed into a socialist one in a single revolutionary action. The socialist structure does not take shape automatically in the womb of capitalism. The nature of socialism is such as to require for its formation the establishment of the rule of the working class and its allies, capable of consciously reorganising social production in the interests of all workers. On the other hand, the establishment of this rule offers merely the *possibility* of creating the new social and economic structure, of abolishing the exploitation of man by man and building socialism.

Turning this possibility into a *reality* takes more than a day or two. It involves the solving of formidable social and economic problems, above all, abolishing the capitalist ownership of the major means of production and socialising the latter, establishing socialist public ownership. Simultaneously it is necessary to socialise the small producers' private property, making it socialist property.

Tasks of a scope as vast as this, affecting the destiny of classes and the way of life of millions,

cannot be accomplished in a brief time. These and similar social and political, cultural and other revolutionary changes require a whole historical period, of varied duration in different countries. And that, precisely, is the *period of transition from capitalism to socialism*.

This period is marked, above all, by the contradiction between incoming socialism and outgoing capitalism. This contradiction of antagonistic character determines the unrelenting struggle between the workers and the bourgeoisie, a struggle in which no quarter is given. The salient feature of this struggle during the transitional period is that it is waged at a time when political power has already been won by the workers and when the dictatorship of the proletariat emerges as the pivot of socialist changes. Besides the main conflict, that between the workers and the bourgeoisie, the transitional period is also marked by the conflict between the working class, on the one hand, and the non-proletarian working sections of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie, the peasants and the intelligentsia, on the other, and between the latter social groups and the bourgeoisie.

The contradictions between the workers and the non-proletarian working sections, whose key interests coincide, are not antagonistic and are resolved as the social nature of the non-proletarian sections undergoes gradual change, owing to private property becoming co-operative property and patient educative work. Although the transitional period cannot be avoided, this does not mean that all the tasks to be tackled at this stage are identical in all countries. While its content uniformly consists in changing capitalism into socialism, the

transitional period has its peculiarities in groups of countries and individual features in each separate country.

These peculiarities and different features may be concerned with certain aspects of the changes introduced or they may be related to the peculiar character of the stages within the transitional period, to the overall duration of the period, and so on.

Lenin pointed out long ago the features of the transition to socialism in countries where large-scale capitalist production predominates, and in those in which small-scale production is prevalent. Clearly enough, it was one thing to organise small-scale farm production along co-operative lines in Russia, where the peasants formed by far the greater part of the population, and quite another in the GDR or Czechoslovakia, in which the workers were the most numerous class. But if in Czechoslovakia and Germany, even before the Second World War, workers accounted for a majority of the population, it was not so in other countries. According to the 1930 census in Hungary, 51.8 per cent of the population were engaged in farming, 9.3 per cent were employed in industry and 23 per cent in transport and trade. In Bulgaria, according to the 1934 census, 78.6 per cent of the population lived in the villages and a mere 21.4 per cent in the towns. As recently as 1939 agriculture contributed 52 per cent of Bulgaria's national income. In Poland before the war, 65 per cent of the population were engaged in agriculture.

In turn, in every country where there is large-scale capitalist industry, just as in countries in

which small farms are predominant, industry is organised and correlated with other forms of economic activity in individual ways.

At the same time, there are inevitable peculiarities and differences in the length of the transitional period from country to country. It would be foolish not to see that it takes longer in less developed countries than in more advanced ones. Apart from that, the situation in some countries may be complicated by civil war, as was the case in Russia. Interruptions of socialist development may occur for internal and external reasons. Witness the counter-revolution in Hungary in 1956, the war in Korea or the crisis in Poland in 1980-82.

Thus, depending on the level of social and economic development in any one country, depending on the alignment of the social forces in it and its internal and international situation, the transitional period may be shorter or longer and may include specific stages of one kind or another. Likewise, the class struggle between working people and exploiters develops in different forms and is more intense in some places than it is in others, proceeding in very dissimilar ways in different fields of social life.

The question that naturally arises at this point is, what are the yardsticks by which one can tell that the transitional period is over and society has entered the phase of socialism?

Since socialism is an integral system of social relations, it would be a mistake to connect the ending of the transitional period with the reaching of a certain landmark in any area of society's economic or political life. A comprehensive approach

must be exercised here, as before the transitional period can end and society can enter the phase of socialism, the *foundations of socialism must have been laid in all the key spheres*. It was precisely in that sense that Lenin applied the term *foundations of socialism*. For him, the foundations of socialism were its supporting structures, the necessary and distinctive characteristics whereby a given society could be described as socialist. By its nature, the term the *foundations of socialism* is a complex notion. It implies (1) the *material and technical* basis of socialism or large-scale mechanised production in industry and agriculture, (2) the *economic* basis or the socialist ownership of the means of production and socialist production relations, (3) the *social class* basis or the socialist-type structure of society, (4) the *political* basis or socialist organisation, the socialist state, the Party, and mass organisations, and (5) the *cultural and ideological* basis.

Therefore, from the standpoint of the stages and landmarks of historical development, the creation of the foundations of socialism is the main result of the transitional period, conclusively indicating that the transitional period is over and society has entered the socialist phase. In the Soviet Union, for example, the Communist Party has recorded two major landmarks in socialist development, namely, that the foundations of the socialist economy or the foundations of socialism had been laid by 1932-33, and that socialism had been built in the main or triumphed by 1936-38. The second landmark was the one signifying the ending of the transitional period.

Is it possible to identify socialist development with the socialist phase of development?

No, it would be a mistake to do so. *Socialist development* and the *socialist phase of development* are not the same thing. The socialist development of a country begins when its people, having overthrown the exploiters' rule and established their own, initiate the process of socialist change. The beginning of this process is marked by the socialist revolution and the establishment of the government of the workers and their allies. From this point, to repeat, starts the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, but not the socialist phase of development itself.

Only when revolutionary change has been accomplished, i.e. after the final triumph of the socialist relations of production founded on the large-scale machine industry, one can say that society has entered a new historical period of development, namely, the phase of socialism.

The socialist phase of development is not the period of transition from capitalism to socialism nor is it the period of the revolutionary reorganisation of the former into the latter; it is the next historical period. This is characterised, above all, by the fact that the struggle between the workers and the bourgeoisie, which went on in the transitional period on the win-or-lose principle, has already been won by the working class and the working people at large.

One of the features of this phase is the *single socialist economic system*, rather than the mixed economy typical of the transitional period. The exploitation of man by man no longer has a place

here. As Lenin aptly put it, this phase is "the conditions of life of a society in which there will be no capitalism." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 469-470.)

How are real socialism and developed socialism related?

The formation and development of real socialism proceeds by definite stages: the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, the stage at which developed socialism is built, and the stage of developed socialism itself. Any developed socialist society is a society of real socialism, but not every society of real socialism is one of developed socialism. Let the facts speak. Cuba, Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea, for instance, have not yet completed their transition to socialism. Most of the European socialist countries, however, already have. Bulgaria, Hungary, the GDR, Romania and Czechoslovakia have started building developed socialism. The key objectives of this stage are stated, and the guidelines for their realisation set, in the programmes and policy documents approved by these countries' Communist and Workers' parties.

Summing up the Soviet people's experience, the CPSU has established that a developed socialist society has been built in the Soviet Union. Thus, the 24th CPSU Congress stated that the "developed socialist society to which Lenin referred in 1918 as to the future of our country has been built by the selfless labour of the Soviet people."

Developed socialist society is an entire historical stage in the formation of communist society, which begins when socialism, victorious and firmly estab-

lished in every area of social life, has also provided the conditions in which all the potentialities and advantages inherent in the socialist social system can be realised. Developed socialism is characterised by the ever growing link between scientific and technological progress and the new social relations, and by the total operation of the objective laws and principles of socialism. An essential feature of developed socialism is the coordinated and harmonious development of each of its spheres. It is a major stage in society's progress towards communism, at which, in the course of resolving the contradictions inherent in developed socialism, are formed all the indispensable preconditions for the subsequent transition to communism.

Developed socialism is not yet communism. It is marked predominantly by all the main features of socialism and by the operation of its principles. Experience shows that underestimating the specific nature of socialism at any of its stages, trying artificially to introduce elements of communism in the absence of the necessary material and technical, as well as economic, organisational and cultural prerequisites, retards, rather than speeds, the advance to communism.

Who wields political power in the socialist countries? Do you accept a political elite? Doesn't it hold the reins in all the countries of the world?

Looking at the political scene in any country, it is immediately obvious that the daily business of government is executed not by all members of society, but by a certain, specially qualified, particu-

lar group. From this it is often argued that in all countries without exception political authority belongs, presumably, to this special group, the "elite", which towers over the rest of society.

This is a fallacious notion which does not go to the heart of the matter but merely glides over the surface. It does, nevertheless, rest on fact. Indeed, by virtue of specific historical circumstances, namely, the level to which the material and spiritual conditions of social life are developed, until a certain point in time and for as long as society is divided into classes, as long as the productive forces are at a level which calls for a division of labour into mental and manual, as long as the great majority of people cannot devote as much time to public affairs as they do to working for their living, as long as not everybody is sufficiently informed and skilled to contribute competently to the administration of society, the need remains for a special group of people to be there to devote their efforts to it, on a full-time basis.

The point is, however, that in a class society this special group of persons, administering public affairs supposedly on behalf of the whole of society, actually administers them to benefit the economically dominant class, from among whose members this group is recruited and whose class aims it pursues.

So, in capitalist society political authority is exercised by representatives of the exploiters, on behalf of the economically dominant capitalist class. The picture is altogether different in the countries embarking on socialist development. There the working class, led by a Marxist-Leninist party, is called upon to exercise workers' rule and imple-

ment the workers' vital interests. For this purpose they set up a system of political public bodies (comprised of the government, political parties, the trade unions, youth, women's and other organisations) in which elected and adequately prepared members of the working people participate.

The electoral system in the countries of real socialism provides for a genuinely popular composition of the representative bodies. Thus, the present People's Chamber of the GDR is made up of 43.8 per cent of industrial workers, the rest of the deputies being white-collar workers (20.4 per cent), agricultural workers, co-operative farm members and individual farmers (15.4 per cent), intellectuals (20.2 per cent) and others (0.2 per cent). In the Hungarian National Assembly elected in June 1975 were 175 industrial workers (44.7 per cent), 48 peasants (13.8 per cent), 146 employees and intellectuals (41.5 per cent). This composition of the highest representative bodies is significant not just in that there are no businessmen, landowners, prosperous merchants and others of the exploiting classes, but also in that it reflects the social class pattern of socialist society. Besides, participation in the representative bodies of people of different occupations, statesmen and scientists, Party members and non-Party people, women and young people, makes it possible to deal with the varied administrative, social, economic and cultural matters efficiently and with due regard for the interests of all social sections.

Yet one should not imagine that this possibility will automatically become a reality. Not unless the policy pursued by the ruling party is correct and scientifically valid, only if it takes proper account

of and expresses the interests of the whole people, will the possibility of the successful functioning of the representative bodies become a fact. That is why constituents' control over their deputy's activity and his (or her) accountability to them is a major principle of the socialist electoral system. "No elective institution or representative assembly," Lenin pointed out long ago, "can be regarded as being truly democratic and really representative of the people's will unless the electors' right to recall those elected is accepted and exercised." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 336.)

The laws of socialist countries establish the following basic kinds of control over deputies' work: deputy has to maintain close and constant contact with his constituents, to keep account of and act on the constituents' suggestions and criticisms, to receive constituents regularly and report back to them at regular intervals on his work as a deputy and the work of the representative body to which he has been elected; a deputy who fails to fulfil his obligations may be recalled in accordance with the procedure established by law.

Is an armed struggle always necessary to begin socialist development in a country?

The mass media in the capitalist countries spare no efforts to hammer into the public the stereotyped propaganda notion that Communists think of the transition to socialism only in terms of armed struggle and bloodshed. For proof, they cite the well-known Marxist dictum that the transition to socialism starts as the result of a victorious socialist revolution.

Let us explain why this argument of Marxists' opponents is false.

The Marxists hold—as they have always held—that the exploiters, the bourgeoisie, will never give up power willingly, nor will they ever consent to hand their means of production over to society. In order to lead society to socialism a revolution has to be accomplished to overthrow the exploiters' power and establish political government of the workers and their allies. This government alone can hand the key means of production over to society as a whole, ending the exploitation of man by man.

Neither Marx nor Lenin, while stressing that the political revolution to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and establish the power of the working class and its allies was inevitable and necessary, ever maintained that the transition to socialism always required an armed struggle everywhere, that bloodshed was inevitable everywhere.

There is recent historical evidence to show that the political revolution is carried out differently in different countries. It shows that neither the forms, nor means, nor methods of the socialist revolution in any of the countries that are socialist today were a mechanical repetition of other people's experience. The GDR or Poland, Hungary or Cuba, Mongolia or Yugoslavia—in a word, all socialist countries—have carried out their revolutions in their own way, in such forms as were dictated by the alignment of the class forces in each country, the characteristic national way of life and the external situation.

As was pointed out at the 26th Soviet Communist Party Congress, "There had been armed struggle

and peaceful forms of passage to the new social system; there had been rapid coming to power of the labouring classes and processes that had dragged out in time. In some countries the revolution had to defend itself against foreign intervention, others had been spared any outside invasions." While in Russia workers' power was established as the result of an armed insurrection in October 1917, and was consolidated during the bloody Civil War (1918-20) unleashed by the exploiting classes, in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe the rule of the working class and its allies was established peacefully, as the democratic revolutions there developed into socialist revolutions in the latter half of the 1940s.

Marxism-Leninism asserts, now as before, not only the necessity of a revolution for the passage to socialism, but also the possibility of *peaceful*, as well as *non-peaceful*, forms of the revolution. The ideological opponents of Marxism, identifying content with form, allege that the Marxists speak of generally inevitable armed struggle and bloodshed. This is sheer falsification.

Why do the Communists in the socialist countries uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat? Haven't revolutionaries always been opposed to dictatorship?

The assertion that revolutionaries have always been opposed to dictatorship is far from indisputable. It is sufficient to recall the revolution in France at the end of the 18th century, which established the Jacobin dictatorship, revolutionary rule that boldly swept out the remnants of feudalism and the Dark Ages, clearing the path for capita-

lism. What do we understand by the dictatorship of the proletariat and why is it necessary for progress towards socialism?

Lenin wrote: "If we translate the Latin, scientific, historico-philosophical term 'dictatorship of the proletariat' into simpler language, it means just the following:

"Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capital, in actually carrying it out, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system..." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 420.)

In explaining the need for political rule by the working class and its allies during the transition from capitalism to socialism, Lenin named three fundamental reasons for it.

The first reason is that the *exploiting classes* in a society where a revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism is taking place will not surrender their privileges unless the working people make them. What is more, they will do everything to prevent the revolutionary changes being carried out. To break their resistance and start building the new society, workers' political power must be established.

Lenin stressed that the "indispensable characteristic, the necessary condition" of workers' power, of their dictatorship, "is the *forcible* suppression of the exploiters as a *class*..." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 256.) That it is impossible to begin socialist development without overthrowing the government of the bourgeoisie and suppressing the

exploiters' resistance has been borne out by the experience of the socialist countries.

In our age, when in many developed capitalist countries the workers form the majority of the active population and enjoy the support of most of the people, new opportunities and ways are opened up both for affirming the power of the working class and the new forms of exercising this power. This, however, is not what some critics of the dictatorship of the proletariat have in mind. Referring to the changed situation, they express doubts about the actual need to establish the power of the majority over the minority, claiming that the majority do not need to resort to force to suppress the exploiting minority. These arguments are wrong, to say the least. This is why.

Should the workers begin socialist development in a society free from exploitation, from relations of domination and subjection, the *hegemony* of the working class, the *will of the majority*, would be sufficient to ensure the transition to socialism. The case, nevertheless, is that the working class has to win leadership under capitalist rule and that it can realise its will only in the course of struggle against capitalist rule, in the course of destroying it and suppressing its resistance and in the course of winning wavering sections of the working people to the side of the working class and asserting the new authority. Replying to the critics, Lenin wrote: "You say that millions need not resort to force against thousands? You are mistaken; and your mistake arises from the fact that you do not regard a phenomenon in its process of development. You forget that the new authority does not drop from the skies, but grows up, arises parallel

with, and in opposition to, the old authority, in struggle against it. Unless force is used against tyrants armed with the weapons and instruments of power, the people cannot be liberated from tyrants." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 245.)

Clearly, coercion as such does not imply that armed struggle, bloodshed and repressive measures are obligatory. If the circumstances permit, it can be applied by other, much less drastic methods. But under all circumstances, suppression of the exploiters' resistance by government measures is just as inevitable as is the exploiters' resistance to socialist change.

The second reason for the necessity of workers' political power is the fact that in a society which is passing from capitalism to socialism there are, besides the opposing classes of the workers and the capitalists, other classes—the peasantry, the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie—and other sections, *non-socialist* by nature.

Lenin repeatedly noted that all groups of working people, apart from the working class, are linked, in one way or another, with private ownership, i.e. with the non-socialist type of production. Certain peculiar features are characteristic of the intellectuals and other sections engaged in mental labour. Since the bearer of the socialist type of production at the beginning of the transition to socialism is the working class alone, the workers should be politically dominant, be the ruling class, in reorganising on socialist principles production and all the social and economic patterns found in a given country.

The social nature of the petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry, is dual. It is contradictory because they

are workers and proprietors at one and the same time. As workers, they are attracted to the working class; as proprietors, they gravitate towards the bourgeoisie. This causes them to vacillate, shifting from one camp to the other. The working class should be mindful of this duality. It should draw them, as workers, under its own banners, explaining to them the ways in which their vital interests can be satisfied, and, taking advantage of its own dominant position and its power, gradually involve the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, into the process of building socialism.

The experience of all socialist countries shows that the socialist reorganisation of small commodity production and the reforming of the social nature of the non-proletarian sections of the working people is a very complex field of activity for the workers' government. No country can avoid this problem, as the private economy and small commodity production are present, in a varying degree, everywhere.

But what about the current scientific and technological progress which perceptibly alters the class structure of capitalist society, "washing away" the petty bourgeoisie? Perhaps this, if nothing else, makes workers' power superfluous? No, it does nothing of the kind. No matter how far advanced capitalism may be in any country, it never appears in pure form anywhere. The middle sections, the petty bourgeoisie, i.e. the social groups which occupy an intermediate position, will never disappear from any capitalist country. That is why the workers' political power will, for a more or less prolonged period, be necessary in any country passing from capitalism to socialism.

With reference to these groups of working people, the working class pursues, for the most part, a policy of persuasion and explanation, suppressing only their acquisitive, exploitative tendencies. The political power of the working class acts in this case as a force opposed to the anarchy and disorganisation introduced by the petty-bourgeois element, it provides guidance for the masses and ensures the organisation of socialist forms of production and labour.

The third reason why workers' power is necessary is connected with the two previously mentioned and it is that in a society passing from capitalism to socialism a *determined class struggle still goes on*. Although removed from power, the bourgeoisie is still there; the proprietary and exploitative leanings of the petty-bourgeois sections do not cease, i.e. the antagonistic social contradictions continue.

Following Marx, who explained why the power of the working class was necessary in the conditions which are at the basis of class struggle, Lenin wrote: "The dictatorship of the proletariat is class struggle waged by a proletariat that is victorious and has taken political power into its hands against a bourgeoisie that has been defeated but not destroyed, a bourgeoisie that has not vanished, not ceased to offer resistance, but that has intensified its resistance." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 380-81.)

All the past history of struggle for building socialism incontrovertibly shows that, after carrying out the revolution and depriving the exploiters of power, the workers and their allies should not rest on their laurels as the question of who finally wins will not be settled for some time after the victo-

rious revolution. It is enough to recall the numerous plots, revolts and armed interventions in Soviet Russia in the early period of its existence or the armed counter-revolution of 1956 in Hungary, to see that in a society building socialism workers' power is the chief weapon and means available to the working people in combating their class enemy.

Perhaps evidence to the contrary can be found in more recent times? Nothing of the kind. The fascist military coup in Chile gave dramatic proof of the fact that a victorious revolution must know how to defend itself from its enemies and that the major means of its defence and of workers' victory in the class struggle was and still is the power of the working class and its allies.

Is there a democratic path to socialism?

There have recently been many assertions to the effect that the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e. the one that the Soviet people and the peoples of the other socialist countries followed, is "undemocratic" and that the working people in Western countries have a different, "democratic" path reserved for them. Such claims do not hold water, if only because the socio-economic changes on the road to socialism require a continuous *growth in the number of those actively involved in them*, i.e. these changes require a growth in the subjective forces of socialism. What else is that but growing democracy? Arguments about the "undemocratic path to socialism" are logically invalid. There neither has been nor can there be any such

path because the problems involved in socialist reforms are too great for any narrow social group to cope with, let alone a government isolated from the people.

One therefore cannot agree with those who put forward the rather abstract alternative of a "democratic" path to socialism for developed capitalist countries and an "undemocratic" one for the countries of real socialism. Behind its plausible scientific appearance, this alternative is a distortion of the substance of the matter, designed, quite definitely, to set in opposition the Marxists in the capitalist and in the socialist countries. Marxist-Leninists have never advocated any "unification" of the forms of transition to socialism. Now as before, they are in favour of studying and soberly comparing the different forms of the transition to socialism, their advantages and disadvantages. As was noted at the 26th CPSU Congress, "unless one ignores the actual facts, one cannot ... contrast Communist parties according to the criterion of recognising or not recognising the ways they choose to reconstruct society." Nor have the Marxist-Leninists ever objected to the statement that it is possible and desirable to take a path to socialism along which use is made of the *already existing* democratic gains and institutions. It is indubitably essential thoroughly to examine all aspects of the question of the possibility of a peaceful path to socialism, utilising the parliament among other things, which rules out armed force.

But we cannot agree with those who claim that this possible path is the *one and only* democratic path, to be contrasted with the presumed undemocratic path which the countries of real socialism

followed. Such comparisons are not only harmful politically, but are unsound in scientific terms. Each country selects a path which is best suited to its circumstances. To call the peaceful path, using the parliament, "democratic" and regard a different path as "undemocratic" is to confuse ideas and be left without a scientific basis for analysis. Marxists have always considered democratic that which is done *in the interests of the working people and by the working people themselves*. From this standpoint, both the peaceful and the non-peaceful paths to socialism are democratic. If one departs from this position, one reaches a dead end and has to agree not only with the sworn opponents of the Soviet Union, who depict the path of the October Socialist Revolution as undemocratic, but also with those diehards who consider—on the same grounds—the people's storming of the Bastille to have been an anti-democratic act.

What are the main features of the political system and political organisation of socialist society?

The *political system* and *political organisation* of society have existed ever since society split into classes. Society, plagued by conflicting and warring interests, creates political authority and policy in the broad sense (as a certain direction in the administration of society and the state), which contain many modified patterns of the organisation and institutions of pre-class society, especially those associated with the exercise of leadership and power. No matter how differently this process developed from nation to nation, its general outcome

was the emergence of a specific system of relationships or the *political system* of society. This rested on all the classes together, with their movement, dynamics and specific relations, and the *political organisation* of society, growing out of these relations, involving more stable political institutions, above all, those concerned with *administration* proper.

From the time when classes emerged and until the efficiency of human labour has reached a level at which it is possible to eliminate class differences in the access to material goods, when a victorious socialist revolution has made it possible and necessary, first, to remove the exploiters from the scene, and next, to cause the differences between classes to disappear—until such time as that, the policy, political system and political organisation of society will be attributes of social life.

During the transition from capitalism to socialism the political organisation of society is a changing and developing system of legal bodies and political public bodies through which power is exercised and the interests of the working class and all working people are protected.

The major elements of this political organisation are: the *socialist state*, with all its inherent functions and the legislative bodies over it, such as the Supreme Soviet, Parliament or National Assembly, the central and local government bodies, the administrative machine, the army, police, the courts, the Public Prosecutor's Office, and so on; the *political party* (or parties, depending on whether there is a single-party or multi-party system in the country) expressing the political aims of the working people and organising their activity; *pub-*

lic political and other organisations (of the type of the National Front in some socialist countries), the trade unions, youth organisations, the co-operative organisations, etc.

It goes without saying that the political system and political organisation have their own characteristics in each socialist country. Most of the socialist countries with more or less ethnically uniform populations have one-chamber parliaments, and federal socialist states—the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia—have two-chamber parliaments. The Soviet Union comprises fifteen sovereign republics, and Czechoslovakia is composed of two republics, the Czech Socialist Republic and the Slovak Socialist Republic. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is comprised of the six federative republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Slovenia, Serbia, Croatia, and Montenegro, and two autonomous provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo, attached to Serbia. The Supreme Soviet of the USSR consists of two equal chambers of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities. Czechoslovakia's Federal Assembly also consists of two equal chambers, the House of the People and the House of Nations. The SFRY Assembly also has two chambers, the Federal Chamber and the Chamber of Republics and Provinces. There are essential differences in the structure and functions of the executive bodies of socialist countries.

Although the structure and type of the political organisation of society remain basically the same at different stages of socialist and communist development, the political organisation of victorious and firmly established socialism differs substan-

tially from that of a society which has just embarked on socialist reforms. The chief difference is that, while retaining its identical socialist nature, the political organisation of society at these stages has a different class content. It is established to provide guarantees of the power of *the working class* and after the final triumph of socialism it becomes a political organisation which guarantees the power of *the whole people*, of all the classes and social groups of society.

**Can the dictatorship of the proletariat continue to exist until communism is reached?
If it cannot, why not?**

The Marxist-Leninists hold that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a transient historical development. It emerges in a specific situation, namely, that of the revolutionary destruction of capitalism, and is consolidated for specific ends, namely, those of abolishing the exploitation of man by man and building socialism. As the situation changes and the objectives are achieved, with the attainment and consolidation of socialism, it ceases to be necessary.

The founders of scientific communism insisted that the dictatorship of the proletariat was necessary and legitimate only where the proletariat was confronted by class adversaries and there was class struggle. So long, Marx wrote, as other classes exist, especially the capitalist class, and so long as the proletariat is fighting the latter—for when the proletariat comes to power neither its enemies nor the old frame of society disappear immediately—it has to resort to *coercive* measures. In continua-

tion of this thought Lenin wrote: "Everywhere the truth has been revealed that in order to vanquish the capitalists it is necessary during the struggle against exploitation, while ignorance is rife, while people do not yet believe in the new system, that the organised urban factory workers become the ruling class." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 476.) Lenin clearly outlines the historical limits of the political supremacy of the working class. He stresses that the dictatorship of the proletariat is needed only for a certain period, "during the struggle against exploitation", "while ignorance is rife", "while people do not yet believe in the new system". This period, as seen from the experience of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, terminates in the victory of socialism and its firm establishment.

What, then, are the palpable changes proving that in Soviet society, for example, the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat have been accomplished?

First, contemporary socialist society in the USSR is a society in which there is no exploitation of man by man and *the exploiting classes have been abolished*. This has introduced essential changes in the organisation of social life, since the function of suppressing these classes' resistance has become obsolete.

Anti-social elements, such as thieves and parasites who live at other people's expense, are, of course, still to be found in socialist society. But it does not take a dictatorship to deal with this evil. Dictatorship is a class concept; the repressive functions of a dictatorship are aimed at repressing a class or classes.

Second. The socialist society that exists today in the Soviet Union is a society in which not only the exploiting classes, but also the *essential class distinctions and differences between social groups*, in terms of their intrinsic nature, have been abolished. Immediately after the October Socialist Revolution the two main classes of the workers and the peasants differed fundamentally in their social nature. The working class was, from the start, a socialist class, the exponent of the socialist type of production. The working peasantry, on the other hand, was by nature a non-socialist, petty-bourgeois class. After the abolition of private ownership in the countryside and the attainment of socialism, the peasantry, whose nature used to be petty-bourgeois, underwent major changes, becoming a socialist class, too. The socialist intelligentsia has developed and is now a strong force, contributing immensely to the development of society as a whole.

Thus, with the triumph of socialism in the USSR, the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the domination of one class "over all other classes" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 212), ceased to be necessary, as the fundamental aspirations and final goals of all the labouring classes and sections are identical. Here, too, the working class, connected with the most advanced form of social production (large-scale industry) and of ownership (public ownership), continues to play the leading role, uniting all working people in building communism. Nevertheless, the leading role of the working class implies its *hegemony, not class supremacy*.

Third. The most important result of the complete victory of socialism in the USSR was that, after

the question of who would win had been resolved and classes and social groups acquired a socialist nature, *there were no more internal reasons for class struggle*. After all, class struggle does not develop just where there are classes, but only where these classes have fundamentally different conflicting aims and incompatible basic interests. Such struggle takes place also during the transitional period, under the dictatorship of the proletariat. That, however, is the last stage, the last historical form of class struggle. Because class struggle disappears, after socialism has been built, the making and execution of decisions affecting the state at large cannot be, and never is, the object of such struggle, as all these decisions have to express the basic interests of the entire people. Lenin called class struggle class war and wrote: "The disappearance of danger (restoration of capitalism—A.B.) would mean that the war had come to an end, and that the dictatorship of the proletariat had ceased." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 99.)

Thus, the dictatorship of the proletariat is not eternal, it cannot continue indefinitely until communism is reached. Its existence is limited to the period of the transition from capitalism to socialism, it ends when socialism has been built and cemented. But the dictatorship of the proletariat does not end by itself. The workers and their ruling party have to consciously curtail the already useless functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, primarily the function of suppression.

Should, however, the working class and its political vanguard "overlook" the changes that have occurred or, which is more likely, should the ruling circles in a given socialist country try, under the

changed conditions, to retain the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat in order to maintain their supremacy, then pseudo-Marxist concepts appear, "prolonging" the dictatorship of the proletariat for the duration of socialism and seeking to prove its necessity until communism is reached. That was precisely what Mao Zedong did.

Mao's doctrine about continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, which he formulated in 1962, was a major ideological weapon geared to achieve particular internal and international objectives. With the help of this doctrine, Mao and his immediate following decided to "give battle" to Marxism-Leninism in the international arena, expecting to hide the collapse of their own general policy. This was the reason for the open letter of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on the general policy of the communist movement, which criticised the thesis of the Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the termination of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR.

After that, in 1965, Mao Zedong, to bolster his unlimited personal power, inspired the "cultural revolution", which was designed to strike a "blow at the headquarters", i.e. the party and government institutions, so as to dislodge from office all those who had incurred the dislike of the "Great Helmsman". It is apt to note at this point that in West European literature the Chinese cultural revolution—even now that in China itself its principal aspects have been denounced—is given an ambiguous assessment. It certainly comes as no surprise that the notorious French Trotskyite Bettelheim should see the cultural revolution in China

as the "incarnation of Mao's revolutionary line" and as the beginning of an actual transition from capitalism to socialism. (Charles Bettelheim, *The Great Leap Backward*, "Monthly Review" N.Y., 1978, Vol. 30, No. 3, p. 38.)

But some West European Marxists, too, detected in the cultural revolution, that patent instance of ignorance, obscurantism and cruelty, some allegedly noteworthy marks of the masses' "initiative", "vigorous struggle against the socialist bureaucracy", and so forth.

More and more facts are coming to light to show that the cultural revolution was a glaring example of the shameless manipulation of millions of men and women. Mao inflamed passions and insisted on continuing the class struggle so long as his opponents were alive. Later, in 1969, he told the 9th CPC Congress: "Socialist society is a fairly long historical stage. At the historical stage of socialism there are still classes, class contradictions and class struggle, there is a struggle between two paths—the socialist and the capitalist, there is the threat of the restoration of capitalism. It is necessary to be aware of the duration and complexity of this struggle. It is necessary to heighten vigilance."

This doctrine reigned until the death of Mao Zedong, ratifying the permanent struggle among the leadership of the CPC and numerous shake-ups of Chinese society.

The Maoists tried for almost twenty years to disprove the CPSU's conclusion that in the conditions of victorious socialism workers' power develops into people's power, the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat develops into the state of

the whole people, and proletarian democracy develops into general democracy.

What changes, if any, has the Soviet political system undergone over the sixty-odd years since the revolution? Have any changes occurred in other socialist countries in this respect?

As the social and economic conditions alter in a society, and even as there occurs a change in the alignment of class forces, which in bourgeois democratic countries often becomes apparent during general elections, the political system, too, is restructured in one way or another. The more far-reaching the socio-economic changes and the more substantial the class shifts occurring in a country, the more its political system is changed.

In the past sixty-odd years the Soviet Union has seen far-reaching social and economic changes. Naturally enough, significant changes have taken place over this time also in the political system of Soviet society. By and large, the main change is that the Soviet system, which emerged in 1917 as the political system of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, has turned, as socialism has been built and consolidated, into the political system of the *government of the whole people*. This was expressed in particular in the fact that the major elements of this system, which are its social class basis, the state and the ruling party, acquired essentially new features. The workers' and peasants' alliance which had provided the social class basis of the Soviet system in the transitional period, was extended to include also the people's intelligentsia; the state of

the dictatorship of the proletariat has become a state of the whole people; the workers' ruling party has turned into a party of the entire people; proletarian democracy has grown into general democracy.

How, then, does the state of the whole people differ from the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Concerning the *objective* changes that occur during the passage from the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat to the state of the whole people, the following should be noted.

First. The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat excluded from the interests under its protection those of the exploiters. More than that, reflecting as it did the interests of the majority, namely of the working people, it was, by the same token, working against the interests of the exploiters, the bourgeoisie. The state of the whole people, on the other hand, represents and expresses the interests of *all* citizens, of all sections of socialist society.

Second. As a socialist state, the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat matched the socialist nature of *one class*, namely *the workers*. The working class was from the first the exponent of the socialist mode of production, and that was why its class interests alone found full expression in the socialist state. It was *its own* state, while the interests of the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, were expressed only to the extent that the urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasants were labouring classes. Their interests as workers were protected, but not as property owners with a tendency to exploit wage labour. In contrast, the state of the whole people, as a *socialist* state, corresponds to the *iden-*

tical socialist nature of all classes and sections of society.

Third. The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat exercised its functions with a view to changing capitalism into socialism in a revolutionary way. That is, first of all, replacing private ownership by public ownership, abolishing the exploitation of man by man, resolving the problems concerned with eliminating the differences between town and country and between mental and manual labour, and so on. The purpose of the state of the whole people is to advance socialist society, improve the society of developed socialism, thus ensuring its conversion into a communist society. For this reason, the functions of the state of the whole people differ significantly from those of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The *subjectively apprehended*, deliberate reorganisation of the state to provide for the transformation of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat into the state of the whole people must also be carried out on the strength of the *objective* changes in the content of the activities of the socialist state.

It is important to see that in each instance this process has and will have its specific features depending on the international situation of each country, the alignment of social forces in it, the durability of its socialist gains, and the level of the masses' socialist consciousness. The political vanguard has to keep track of the changes occurring in society, taking them all into account. The latter is essential for the efficiency of the political organisation, of the structure, functions and performance of public bodies.

Because the transition to socialism, and then to developed socialist society and communism, is the path of other socialist countries as well as of the Soviet Union, the changes occurring there in the political field are of a similar nature. There, too, the exploitation of man by man is gradually abolished and the exploiting classes vanish. All labouring classes acquire a socialist character, and therefore in the countries where socialism has already been attained the system of political power of the working class also develops into the system of political power of the whole people.

What errors were made in some socialist countries because of the personality cult of a leader, and what were their reasons? Would it be right to think personality cults an inevitable part of the socialist system?

As we turn our attention to these complicated and dramatic issues—for heeded they must be, as they are exploited by the critics of real socialism and its political organisation—it should be stressed at once that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union never rejects any criticisms directed at Soviet experience. The report of the Central Committee to the 26th CPSU Congress stated: "Critical judgments of separate concrete aspects of development in our country are sometimes voiced in some Communist parties. Far be it from us to think that everything we had was ideal. In the USSR, socialism was built in incredibly difficult conditions. The Party hewed its way through virgin land. And nobody knows better than we do what difficulties and shortcomings occurred along the way, and which of them have still to be overcome."

What specific difficulties of an *objective* character encountered during the transition from capitalism to socialism and the building of socialism in the USSR should be taken account of first of all in analysing these negative processes?

We shall mention only the very main things. Firstly, socialist development in Russia immediately after the October Revolution was vastly complicated by economic backwardness due to the belated growth of capitalism and strong vestiges of feudalism. Secondly, what further increased the difficulty of building a new society was that it had to be done in a single country encircled by hostile capitalist states, in circumstances which made it imperative to build socialism quickly. Last but not least, apart from these weighty internal and external factors, progress was also hampered by the objective historical fact that the Soviet Republic was blazing the trail to socialism in the absence of any previous experience in that respect.

How did these specific, objective circumstances affect socialist development?

Although Russia was economically at a level sufficient to launch socialist development, it was still one of those countries for which, according to Lenin, it was easier to begin the revolution but more difficult to carry it through to "final victory, in the sense of the complete organisation of a socialist society." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 310.) This posed special economic, socio-political and ideological problems.

In *economic* terms, because capitalism had not reached an advanced stage in Russia, the country had to be industrialised to provide the material and technical base of socialism. The problem was

how to accumulate the necessary funds. Moreover, in view of the capitalist encirclement which had not only imposed an economic blockade but constantly threatened armed aggression, internal resources had to be found without delay. In those conditions the Soviet people objectively had no choice but to limit consumption to a bare minimum. This drastic mobilisation of internal resources, which demanded material sacrifices from all the people, could not but tell on every sphere of social life. Democracy had to be restricted and pressure and coercion more often applied.

In *socio-political* terms, in terms of the balance of class forces, the level of the country's development meant that the workers, who held power, were fewer in number than the exploiters in the towns and villages, to whom that power was opposed. In 1913, the industrial workers and their families accounted for 14.6 per cent of the population, and the exploiters and their families, for 16.3 per cent. It made the latter confident of their strength and was responsible for the extreme intensity of the class struggle, with its armed insurrection and Civil War. Apart from that, the strength of the new government and the very building of the new society depended here enormously—much more than they did in many other countries—on the strength of the alliance between the workers and the working peasants who made up the overwhelming part of the population.

In *ideological* terms, the predominance of the rural population, largely patriarchal and holding prejudices and views inherited from feudal society, created a serious threat that the peasants' faith and hope in "strong rule" and their inherited notions of

the hierarchical organisation of authority, associated with unthinking obedience to it and its deification, might find their way to the working class. This danger of the cult of strong rule, with its feudal-bureaucratic, hierarchic structure, with the idolised apex of the "power pyramid", unavoidably became greater as yesterday's peasants swelled the ranks of the working class, and as members of the peasantry were increasingly drawn into various levels of the administration of society and the state.

Nor should one overlook the peculiar conditions of socialist development, which objectively required firm and centralised rule with its administrative machine, regular army and the bodies charged with the maintenance of order. Why were they peculiar? First of all, because of the country's insufficient economic development more administrative units had to be set up to make up for the unformed or absent economic ties between districts and regions as well as between industries, which in a developed economy are the natural result of the division of labour, specialisation and co-operation. Thus, the administrative machine was continually enlarged. Further, the administrative forces, though recruited in the early period from a necessarily limited section of the working class, included also former bourgeois specialists and former peasants, not steeled by any proletarian experience, who were guided by the administrative concepts of the old regime. It should also be remembered that the new administrative machine lacked practical experience in social management in general, let alone in the management of socialist construction. The insufficient general cultural level prevented the rapid replacement of administrators and hindered public control

of the different parts of the administrative machine. This made it more difficult to find a socialist solution to the problem of government and the governed.

Some of Lenin's works written soon after the establishment of Soviet rule contain his reflections on the possible ways of dealing with this problem. In particular he noted that the Civil War and the struggle against foreign intervention, which swept the whole country and lasted more than four years, demanded the creation of a standing army and of special repressive bodies. During the Civil War a large and the more active part of the exploiting classes was smashed, while many emigrated from the USSR. This altered the balance of class forces greatly, making it easier for the Soviet government to carry out its constructive tasks.

But the Civil War—and earlier still the First World War of 1914-18, in which Russia took part—and the devastation they entailed had badly undermined the strength of the working class, causing the degradation of some of its sections, and weakening the very groundwork of power, its proletarian base. Conscious of these obstacles, Lenin paid particular attention to strengthening the social basis of power and bringing it closer to the mass of the workers. He put forward some suggestions on strengthening workers' control over government bodies. He also insisted on a clear division between the functions of the Party and of the government and stressed the paramount importance of preserving the unity of the Party in this situation.

It is precisely the objective circumstances in which socialist construction began in the USSR that explain many specific features which marked

the operation of working-class power and the political organisation of society here. The comparatively low level of economic development, the smallness of the working class, and the armed resistance encountered from the internal and external counter-revolution were the major reasons for the necessity of workers' power being exercised here in its toughest form. In the conditions of the transitional period, members of the bourgeoisie who still remained were denied the right to vote while their parties, which were actively counter-revolutionary, were banned. This ruled out broad political opposition and its public criticism of socialism in the process of construction.

Let us note that the petty-bourgeois parties functioned for some time within the framework of the political organisation of society, some of them—the Left Socialist Revolutionaries—even being represented in the country's first government. Nevertheless, as they too committed unlawful, counter-revolutionary acts, these parties also left the political scene. A single-party system became firmly established in the Soviet republic. This system, by its very nature, involved no public discussion between parties when working out home and foreign policy.

We have already mentioned that in view of the internal and international situation the country had to be rapidly industrialised to ensure its military and industrial strength, and that not only made impossible any noticeable rise in living standards, but obliged the people to make sacrifices and make do with no more than was absolutely necessary. It goes without saying that not all sections of the population were equally prepared to stint themselves and comply with economic restrictions. This fact

could not but be reflected in certain government measures affecting the scope of democracy and the exercise of citizens' rights and freedoms and limiting to some extent inner-Party and Soviet democracy. This was unavoidable in the conditions of the bitter struggle against the class enemies and their agents.

These and other specific circumstances demanded careful consideration and a mechanism of implementing the workers' power devised accordingly, to guarantee the realisation of the will of the working class and all workers and ensure the successful building of socialism—a mechanism which would rule out any lop-sided, distorted exercise of authority. No such mechanism, however, yet existed nor did any experience in creating one. In this situation it was possible to abuse power, to use it for personal ends, which indeed happened under Joseph Stalin's personality cult. In other words, while the *possibility* of such distortions was due to *objective* circumstances, to the absence of any machinery guaranteeing the implementation of the power of the working class and working people at large, the *actual* infringements of socialist democracy, deviations from the principles of functioning of the political structure of the new society, sprang from *subjective* causes, from, above all, certain features of Stalin's character, of whose dangerous nature Lenin had warned the Party. After all, in Lenin's lifetime, when the home and foreign situation, in which the first steps were taken towards socialism, was even more complicated, and when the above-mentioned specific, objective circumstances were already present, no such infringements were in evidence.

As to whether the personality cult can be regarded as a corollary of the socialist system, we should ascertain first of all where this question springs from. It must have been suggested by the fact that not only was there at one time Stalin's personality cult in the Soviet Union, but there were varied manifestations of the personality cult in other socialist countries as well.

It would be wrong to deny that in those countries, too, there were some of the objective conditions which were responsible for the emergence of Stalin's personality cult in the Soviet Union. Except in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, the industrial level in these countries was similarly low, the problem of primary accumulation was just as acute, the peasantry with its worship of "strong rule" was equally predominant, and so on. It is, nevertheless, even more important to note that soon after the war, just when personality cults spread in them, these countries, the GDR and Czechoslovakia included, were developing in a system of diverse relations with the USSR and very often copied Soviet realities, those of a negative kind, too.

Yet, even though features of the personality cult were repeated and reproduced almost everywhere, it still cannot be regarded as an inevitable feature of socialist society. The personality cult is a manifestation of a deformation of socialism and is profoundly alien to its nature.

The fact is that, strong as its pressure may be, the peasants' attitude of veneration and striving for "strong rule" and the hierarchy of cult and feudal relations, which they would like to reproduce and to see firmly entrenched, need not necessarily prevail among the ruling party's leaders. If the rul-

ing party, remembering the lessons of the past, sees the danger of the peasants' feudalist mentality and ideology and works persistently to prevent these from spreading in its own ranks, the way to the personality cult will be effectively barred.

Is it possible to regard the developments in Hungary in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and in Poland in 1956, 1970, 1976 and 1980-81 as manifestations of a political crisis? In general, can there be a political crisis in a socialist country?

Although the developments in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland had some features in common which need to be elucidated and explained, they are far from identical differing quite significantly in some respects. One feature they all share is that they were initiated primarily by far-advanced errors committed by the government which called itself a government of the working people but was actually one no longer and was acting against the interests and will of the working people. Another shared feature was the people's discontent with these government policies. At the same time, each of the developments had distinctive characteristics. In order to understand them clearly, we must go back to the basic concepts of *political crisis*, *socio-political conflict*, and *counter-revolution*.

Looking at the history of the Soviet Union, it was already clear in its early period that socialist development was not a continuous and steady movement along a smooth path; that this development not only had its contradictions, obstacles and unforeseen situations, but was accompanied by

errors and miscalculations which caused discontent among the masses, sometimes leading to crises and conflicts. The first political and economic crisis of this kind was, of course, the one which developed in Soviet Russia into the Kronstadt fortress mutiny (1921).

Lenin wrote about these events that after passing from the Civil War to peaceful constructive effort "we felt the impact of a grave—I think it was the gravest—internal political crisis in Soviet Russia. This internal crisis brought to light discontent not only among a considerable section of the peasantry, but also among the workers." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 421.) Stating that it was a political crisis "when we first witnessed some internal political wavering which did not result from external enemy pressure" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 405), Lenin first of all outlined the underlying causes of the situation. They derived from the mistakes made by the Communist Party when it had lost touch with real conditions and continued its earlier policy dictated by the harsh circumstances of the fierce Civil War, in which peasants were obliged to hand over to the state all surplus raw material and foodstuffs to meet wartime requirements—without paying enough attention to the interests of the broad mass of the peasantry and to the whole process of rehabilitating the economy ruined by the war. The Party failed to take into account all the complications involved in passing to peaceful constructive work. And that, Lenin wrote, "is undoubtedly one of the main causes of all our mistakes in policy during the period under review, from which we are now suffering." (*Ibid.*, p. 171.) The resulting discontent among the masses offered

counter-revolutionaries inside and outside the country an opportunity which they did not miss. One of their perfidious attacks was the Kronstadt mutiny.

Pointing out the relationship between the *political crisis* in the country and the *socio-political conflict* which had found expression in the Kronstadt mutiny, Lenin did not equate them, for a political crisis and a socio-political conflict are not the same thing. The socialist countries' later experience has contributed to a better understanding of the nature of each of these phenomena, and of the relationship and difference between them.

A *political crisis* in a socialist country is a serious disruption of the normal functioning of its political system, where a significant section of the people denies its support to society's governing political organisation, to its key elements such as the ruling party and the state, protesting against their policy, showing discontent, and thereby preventing the political system from performing its functions successfully. The crisis that arose in 1921 in Soviet Russia was precisely of that kind. The political crises which occurred in other countries, including Poland, also basically sprang from the masses' disagreement with the policy pursued, from the fact that they would not support this policy and were discontented with what the authorities did.

Unlike a political crisis, a *socio-political conflict*, which occurs when the masses openly take action against the government and its policy, is one of the forms into which a political crisis develops. Depending on the causes from which a socio-political conflict springs, the forces involved in it, and objectives pursued, one can tell whether it

amounts to *workers' protest* against mistakes made by socialist government or to *counter-revolutionary action* aimed at *overthrowing* socialist government as such.

Plainly, it is vitally important to differentiate between a political crisis and a socio-political conflict, just as between workers' protest and counter-revolution. This differentiation determines not only the attitude to be adopted to these events, but also the measures permissible in each case. Equally important is a correct understanding of the actual causes of political crises in socialist countries.

To go back to the nature of what happened in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland, one should see that in each instance the mistakes and distortions, of which the ruling parties and political authorities were guilty, caused deformations of socialism, simultaneously provoking discontent among the masses. That discontent developed into political crises and socio-political conflicts which the internal and external enemies of socialism sought to direct towards the restoration of the capitalist order, i.e. to effect a *counter-revolutionary coup*. That was the case in Hungary in 1956, where the socio-political conflict very soon grew into overt counter-revolution. In Czechoslovakia developments proceeded along the same lines, although by other methods, through "creeping", "quiet" counter-revolution. In both instances the internationalist assistance given to the working class and working people of these countries helped to stop counter-revolution and ensure their further successful advance along the socialist path they had chosen. In Poland, far-advanced deformations of socialism repeatedly brought about political crises and socio-

political conflicts during which the working people, openly protesting against the mistakes and deformations, had the culprits removed from office. But as the causes of the mistakes and deformations were not uprooted and, moreover, as negative developments recurred and accumulated, the political crisis in Poland was the most acute of all. The anti-socialist forces that had made their way into "Solidarity" and other organisations, tried to direct the masses' discontent against the foundations of socialism itself. This retrogressive process was arrested when, in keeping with the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic, martial law was declared in the country on December 13, 1981.

What is socialist democracy? How does it differ from democracy in the capitalist countries? Is democracy possible under class dictatorship?

Before replying to these questions, one has to say at least a few words about what democracy is in general and what changes it undergoes in class society.

Democracy is a major achievement of mankind, for it is a method—evolved and improved in the course of world history—for solving the vital problems of a human community, whereby *all* its members are entitled to take part in solving such problems, on the principle of majority rule. Democracy emerged in pre-class society and then acquired an entirely different character under conditions of struggle between antagonistic classes. Fundamental changes in democracy were also due to the fact that, with the development of industry,

population growth and the appearance of large states, it became impossible for all members of society to take an immediate part in solving vital questions. Thus, side by side with direct democracy, there arose indirect or *representative democracy*. Greater complexity of social functions gave rise to a division of society into government and the governed. The actual opportunity for all citizens to deal with the affairs of the state became in the course of time a *legal norm*. Realising this right, however, came to depend on additional stipulations, which made it less real. Lastly, class antagonisms became apparent in the field of democracy and turned the latter into a means by which the economically-dominant class began to exercise supremacy.

During its history, political democracy evolved and tested in practice its institutions—assemblies of the people, parliaments, councils, committees, central and local bodies, elected or appointed executives. The pros and cons of direct and representative democracy, of different ways of bringing legislative and executive power into relation, different methods of voters' control over their elected representatives and the representatives' control over the executive, were all tested in practice. Practice had confirmed that democracy is the most efficient form—and under socialism it is an indispensable form—of finding solutions to vital problems of social development.

Simultaneously history also shows that democracy never appeared and struck root where and when the exploiters, those in government, wanted it to. It did happen, as it still does, only when the masses themselves wrenched concessions from the exploiters, forced them to accept their own de-

mands and secured the establishment of institutions necessary for the expression of their interests, for public opinion to be taken into consideration. Democracy is a major achievement of mankind precisely because it has accumulated not only centuries of experience in managing society effectively, but also the results of the people's class battles.

Speaking about the relationship between democracy and dictatorship as forms of political power, it is important to see that here we have two different forms, opposite in some respects, of implementing power, implementing class rule or class dictatorship.

The essential difference between democracy and dictatorship, or more exactly between a democratic and a dictatorial regime, lies in the fact that in the former case class rule is exercised in such a way as to allow the masses to retain their rights and freedoms and their ability under the law to influence the making of decisions on social problems. In the latter case, citizens' rights and freedoms are drastically restricted, if not cancelled altogether, and there is no legal possibility of any general expression of popular will. While stressing the contrast between the two forms of government, we should not forget that we are speaking about the *forms*, and not about the *content*, of power and we should remember that, according to its essential nature and its historical role, any form of dictatorship by a revolutionary class is immeasurably *more progressive* than the dictatorship of a reactionary class because under the former essentially new tasks are undertaken and carried out in the interests of the *majority of the people*.

Socialist democracy differs fundamentally from bourgeois democracy in that under the latter the minority, the exploiters, hold power, although they make it seem that the interests and will of the whole people are realised.

Is the single-party system compatible with democracy? Is the multi-party system compatible with socialism?

First of all let us make it clear what a political party is and what its role in contemporary society and its place in the system of political democracy are.

A *political party* is a political organisation uniting the more active members of a certain social class or group, expressing and realising its interests and directing its political struggle. Lenin wrote: "In a society based upon class divisions, the struggle between the hostile classes is bound, at a certain stage of its development, to become a political struggle. The most purposeful, most comprehensive and specific expression of the political struggle of classes is the struggle of parties." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 79.)

The social function of a political party is precisely to comprehend and express, in programmes and other documents, the interests of its class or a part of this class, as well as to find ways and means of realising these interests and organising the activity of its own class and its allies.

In a society composed of antagonistic classes, for example, the capitalists and the workers, each of the classes has one or more parties of its own.

Thus, the bourgeoisie in the United States has two parties, the Democrats and the Republicans. The French working class is represented in the political arena also by two parties, the Communists and the Socialists. Each of the parties of a given class, based upon a certain section of its class, seeks to demonstrate that it expresses its interests in a better way, more exactly and more truly, than any other party. Yet a party must be judged not by its declared political programmes, slogans or promises, but by its political practice, what it does and what it has done.

To come back to our queries, let us note the following right away. History tells us that the level and measure of democracy and the extent of democracy in a class society do not depend on whether the given society has a single-party or a multi-party system. The degree to which it is democratic is determined not by how many parties there are, but by the extent to which the interests and will of the working people—who always form by far the greater part of the population—are realised.

Naturally, in a society made up of antagonistic classes with their opposite interests—e.g., the bourgeoisie and the workers under capitalism—for these interests to be given free, democratic expression and be openly fought for, there should be at least two parties, if not more, i.e. it takes a multi-party, rather than a single-party, system. Nevertheless, the converse, “the multi-party system is the index of a society’s democracy”, is not true, because the bourgeoisie, which knows the ropes of representative democracy, has long made the multi-party system a screen for its political supremacy. It is no secret that when the Democrats are replaced in office

by the Republicans and vice versa, the immutable supremacy of the US monopoly bourgeoisie is not in the least affected. The same goes for other multi-party systems in bourgeois democracies.

Socialist society differs fundamentally from all other class societies precisely in that there are no antagonistic classes in it. The peasantry, small proprietors and professional people, as well as the entire working class, are vitally interested in the attainment and further growth of socialism. Since the vital interests of the workers and these other classes and sections are basically identical, the Marxist-Leninist party of the working class can, as soon as the struggle for socialism has been launched, be the spokesman of the interests not only of the working class, but of all other working people as well. Wherever it could be done, the Marxist-Leninist party became, after the seizure of power by the workers and their allies, the sole political party representing the interests of all working people in their struggle for socialism, i.e. the single-party system was adopted. This was the case in the USSR after the other parties had broken the socialist law and been disbanded, and in Hungary after 1956. When, however, after the establishment of the power of the working class and its allies, other parties besides the Marxist-Leninist party continue to function, expressing during the building of socialism the specific interests of other labouring classes and social groups, the multi-party system remains in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism and under socialism.

Let us take a look at this aspect of the experience of real socialism. The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which met in October (Old Style)

1917 and proclaimed Soviet power in Russia, elected the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the highest executive body, which included representatives of the party of Bolsheviks, Left Socialist Revolutionaries and other parties. The Bolsheviks made up the majority of the Congress (400 out of the 650 delegates who had registered by the opening of the Congress) and could, by right, form a one-party government. But the Bolsheviks considered it possible to give 29 seats in the government and the CEC, comprised of 101 persons, to the second largest group of Congress delegates who represented the petty-bourgeois party of Left Socialist Revolutionaries, and 10 seats to representatives of other parties. The main and only condition stipulated by Lenin was: "We stand firmly by the principle of Soviet power, i.e., the power of the *majority* obtained at the last Congress of Soviets. We agreed, and *still agree*, to share power with the minority of the Soviets, provided that minority loyally and honestly undertake to submit to the majority and carry out the programme, *approved by the whole* Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, for gradual, but firm and undeviating steps towards socialism." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 307.) It was not until the Left Socialist Revolutionaries had broken this condition, taking advantage of their position in the government to organise a counter-revolutionary revolt and thereby engaging in illegal activities, that their party was dissolved and banned, along with other parties which broke the law, and a single-party system was established in the country. Single-party systems exist today also in Cuba, Hungary, Mongolia, Romania and Yugoslavia. Other socialist countries—Bulgaria, the GDR, Poland, Czechoslo-

vakia, Vietnam, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea—have two-party and multi-party systems. In Bulgaria there is the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union (BAPU), a peasants' organisation which has been closely co-operating with the Communists ever since 1900. During the struggle with the Nazis and their Bulgarian henchmen, the left wing of the BAPU joined the Fatherland Front. Recognising the leading role of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the BAPU has made a weighty contribution to socialist changes and is actively participating today in building developed socialism in Bulgaria.

In Poland, closely co-operating with the Polish United Workers' Party are the United Peasants' Party, which expresses the interests of some sections of the Polish peasantry, and the Democratic Party, which emerged in 1939 as an anti-fascist party. In the GDR, co-operating with the Socialist Unity Party of Germany are four parties: the Democratic Farmers' Party, the Liberal Democratic Party, the National Democratic Party, and the Christian Democratic Union of Germany. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia co-operates with four other parties. Three-party systems exist in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The multi-party system is thus quite compatible with socialism. Yet, it should be stressed once again that, under socialism as well, the extent of democracy in a country is determined not by the number of parties, but by the degree to which the interests and will of the working people are realised by the political system.

Is there any difference in the state and political structure of individual socialist countries? If there is, what is it and what is it due to?

"The transition from capitalism to communism," Lenin wrote, "is certainly bound to yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 418.) The truth of this has been borne out by life itself. By now, the revolutionary practice of the working class and its allies counts many political forms in which their power was implemented or is implemented at present. These are the *Paris Commune* (1871), the first, if brief, government of the working class; *Soviet power* in Russia, which has existed for more than sixty years now; and the *power of the working class* in some countries of Europe and Asia and in Cuba.

When revolutionary power materialised as the dictatorship of the proletariat, its different forms already had their specific features. If we compare the *Soviet* form of proletarian power which existed in the USSR and the form of *people's democracy* in some European countries, we shall see that in the Soviet Union the bourgeoisie was deprived of the vote, while this was not the case in other countries. In the USSR the Soviets completely replaced the former system of power. People's democracies, on the contrary, made use of a number of the old state forms, like the parliament, the institute of presidential power, and so on. Under people's democracy, the Fatherland or National Front was a widely used form of organisation. As socialism is built and cemented and society advances towards developed socialism, *the power of the work-*

ing class becomes the power of the whole people, which also necessarily has its specific features.

Obviously enough, the diversity of forms of the political power of the whole people stems from other immediate reasons than the diversity of forms of the political power of the working class. Whereas the latter forms emerged as a result of the struggle of the working class and all working people against the exploiters, for the triumph of the revolution and the firm establishment of their power, the forms of political power of the whole people usually spring from two causes. First of all, they spring from the specific form of the political power of the working class in a country. When this power grows into the power of the whole people, many forms of the political organisation of society that took shape at the preceding stage may be inherited and preserved. Secondly, they spring from the purposeful activity of the working class, the working people and their political vanguard seeking forms of organisation to match the new tasks undertaken in changed conditions.

Naturally, the underlying sources of the specific features of the political power of the working class and of the political power of the whole people are, in the final analysis, rooted in the features of the national state conditions. Therefore, speaking of the forms of the political power of the whole people it would hardly be correct to say that things take the same shape in all countries that have entered the phase of socialism. Of course, the drawing together of the socialist states continues. But this process does not erase the ethnic or historical features of socialist countries. And there is reason to

say that a *specific national* form of the power of the whole people develops in every country.

Even people's democracy as a form of the power of the working class has reflected not only the general, but also the specific national conditions of its emergence in countries which have embarked on the socialist path. That is why, alongside the general features of this power, such as, for example, a broader social class alliance—the alliance between the working class and all the working peasantry, not just the poorest peasants—on which this power relied since its very emergence, the utilisation of some old forms of political organisation, and so on, each country also had national specific features. These distinctive features were especially significant in the German Democratic Republic, where the workers' power was established after the defeat of Nazism. Equally significant were the differences in the structure of political organisation in multinational countries, like Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.

Local representative bodies and the central executive bodies of state authority differed from the very beginning in name as well as in their structure and functions. Thus, local representative bodies of power are *People's Councils* in Bulgaria, Vietnam and Romania, *National Councils* in Poland, *Councils* in Hungary, *People's Representations* (in communities) and *Councils of Deputies* (in districts) in the GDR, *National Committees* in Czechoslovakia, *People's Assemblies* in Yugoslavia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, *Hurals of People's Deputies* in Mongolia. The highest bodies of state administration are Councils of Ministers in most of the socialist countries, the Govern-

ment in Czechoslovakia, the Federal Executive Council in Yugoslavia, the Administrative Council in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They differ both in their structure and in the distribution of functions among the different sections of state administration.

In the course of socialist development the political organisation in each country underwent further change, depending on the prevailing conditions. Already during the transitional period in Hungary the multi-party system was replaced by a single-party system. Federal structure has been introduced in Czechoslovakia. Significant changes have occurred in Yugoslavia. Many distinctive features have appeared in all socialist countries in the system of economic management, in the forms of democracy in production, and in the structure of local government bodies.

These changes usually adapted the political organisation of society to tackling new tasks of socialist development in the changed internal and international conditions. Even so, one can hardly subscribe to the opinion that the forms of political power have been further unified. This judgement contradicts the logic of the historical process which, under socialism, leads to the further development of nations, consolidation of national sovereignty, and fuller account being taken of national features. Besides, it does not tally with the real situation. Therefore, while stressing the progressive drawing together of the socialist countries, one must not overlook the development of national forms in the formation and realisation of the power of the whole people.

It is appropriate, when taking this approach to the question of the forms of the power of the whole people which emerge in the socialist countries, to outline the main trends in the differences possible here. These differences affect the structure of the political organisation of victorious socialism: firstly, its constituent elements and, secondly, their relationships and functions.

As regards the elements of this structure, the organisation of victorious socialism, as well as of socialism now being built, may comprise not one party, as in the USSR, Hungary and Romania, but several, as in Bulgaria, the GDR, Vietnam and Czechoslovakia. The important thing is that the leading role belongs to the Marxist-Leninist party. It has been found that at this stage, too, the political organisation of society may comprise as its element such a socio-political form as the National Front.

Let us note that already in the 1960s, as the foundations of socialism had been built in a number of European countries and they entered the socialist phase of development, the question arose of the future of the organisation of the type of the National (Fatherland) Front. A certain underestimation of the role of this organisation became current. What was more, there appeared a tendency towards curtailing its activity under socialism. The Communist and Workers' parties rejected such views. The opinion prevailed that an organisation or movement of the type of the National (Fatherland) Front was not only the basis but a structural part of the political organisation of socialist society, wherever this movement existed, and was necessary during the whole period of socialism's de-

velopment and improvement. Naturally, the activities of such a movement or organisation also lend specific features to the political organisation of society. The structural elements of the political organisation of society differ quite materially in countries which are mainly uninational and multinational. It is enough to compare in these terms the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, on the one hand, and Hungary, the GDR, Bulgaria and Poland, on the other, for these differences to be clearly evident.

Not only the *structure* of the political organisation, but also the distribution of *functions* between the central and local, representative and executive bodies of government in socialist countries are far from identical, and they cannot be unified in the future either. Naturally, differences exist in the organisation of democracy in production, in the rights of bodies of workers and managements, in the role of workers' meetings, workers' councils and trade unions, in the extent of workers' functions of power, in the concrete totality of citizens' constitutional rights and freedoms, and so on.

The building of socialism evidently presupposes a sober estimation of the real situation and a search for the most rational answers to problems. How is it done under the single-party system?

The formulation of this question derives from the idea that the multi-party system, connected with the struggle between parties and their reciprocal criticisms, makes it possible to ensure the most so-

ber estimation of the real situation and the search for the most rational decisions, while it is difficult or even impossible given a single-party system.

We must point out at once that this idea finds corroboration neither in the experience of capitalism nor in the experience of socialism. All the world knows what gross blunders and ill-considered decisions were made by bourgeois governments under the multi-party system (e.g. the Gulf of Tonkin incident which drew the USA into its adventurist war in Vietnam). And the socialist world, if we recall, for instance, the series of political crises in the 1950s and 1970s in Poland, with its multi-party system, also shows that there is no reason for the faith in that system's salutary qualities. Therefore, in replying to the question with which we are concerned, it will be better to dwell on the mechanisms of socialist society, which—whether in the case of a single-party or a multi-party system—are there to ensure a sober estimation of the real situation and the most rational choice of decisions.

Under socialism, the leading role belongs to the Marxist-Leninist party. In this role, the party has every opportunity for soberly estimating the real situation and making the most rational decisions by dint of the following circumstances. First of all, in making its decisions the party must be guided by Marxism-Leninism, one of whose most characteristic features is that it integrally combines a sober estimation of the objective circumstances with recognition of the importance of the active involvement of parties, classes and the masses. And since working people are always the majority of the

nation, appraising the available opportunities and selecting decisions from the standpoint of the interests of the majority provides for a broader and hence a truer approach to solving different problems and choosing possible ways of development. Moreover, one of the most important rules of the Marxist-Leninist parties' internal life has always been criticism and self-criticism. This allows the ruling party to submit any decision it is about to make for discussion not only to its membership but also to the public at large and take into account their suggestions and criticisms and simultaneously refine and improve the draft decision with a view to making the fullest possible use of the available opportunities and selecting the best of the alternatives.

It is enough to take a look at the periodical press in the socialist countries to see how broadly and competently, with the enlistment of specialist opinion, economic and political questions are discussed there before the relevant decisions are adopted. Socialism's historical experience shows that if the ruling party takes a scientific approach to the tasks in hand and if it takes into account the interests of the most diverse sections of the people, widely applying the method of criticism and self-criticism, not concealing from the working people the difficulties involved and making them the subject of broad discussion so as to find the surest ways of overcoming these difficulties, this achieves the desired result. And conversely, failures, miscalculations, wrong decisions in a socialist country each time arise from departures from these rules, which are indispensable if the Marxist-Leninist party is to play its leading role.

Do the ruling Communist parties recognise the right of other parties to fight for political power?

Now as before, the Communists hold that political power in a society building socialism should belong to the people. As, however, social life cannot be administered by all citizens without exception, under representative democracy authority has to be exercised on behalf of the people by its political representatives who have a thorough understanding of the people's interests and can look after them most proper.

The working class and all working people have an interest, above all, in abolishing the exploitation of man by man and providing the fullest possible social justice. The programme for building such a society and the ways and methods of realising this programme are offered to the working class and all working people by the Communist party. Along with this programme the working people are offered other programmes and other methods of their realisation by other parties—social-democratic, socialist, religious, and so on. Each party tries to promote its own programme and the suitable methods of its implementation and to win the support of the masses.

History shows that parties often form coalitions and alliances, putting forward joint demands. It also happens that the struggle for socialism may provide the basis for the union of several parties which simultaneously come to power as a result of parliamentary victory, afterwards continuing to struggle among themselves. During this struggle, depending on how efficiently and thoroughly different parties carry out their programmes and their

promises, they may peacefully alternate in office, holding the reins of government in turn. As long ago as the summer of 1917 Lenin saw that the "change of classes and parties in power" was possible. (*Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 186.)

Noting the significance of that aspect of the situation then existing in Russia and analysing the ways of changing the class nature of power, Lenin wrote: "The latter aspect of the matter has similarly not yet received adequate attention. In their class composition, the Soviets were organs of the movement of the workers and peasants, a ready-made form of their dictatorship. Had they possessed full state power, the main shortcoming of the petty-bourgeois groups, their chief sin, that of trusting the capitalists, really would have been overcome, would have been criticised by the experience of their own measures." And further, and most importantly, Lenin concluded: "*The change of classes and parties* (my italics—A.B.) in power could have proceeded peacefully within the Soviets, provided the latter wielded exclusive and undivided power. The contact between all the Soviet parties and the people could have remained stable and unimpaired." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 186.)

It goes without saying that, with this possibility in mind, the Communists, after coming to power as well, should try to express the interests of the working class and all working people even more thoroughly and more fully so as not only to retain, but also to consolidate their political positions, avoiding mistakes through which they might lose the support of the masses and with it political power, too.

What is meant by freedom of conscience? What is the situation of the church and religion in the socialist countries? Can a believer be a member of the Communist party?

Conscience—in the broadest sense—is one's ability independently to choose or formulate for oneself moral commands, to act on them, and to judge one's actions by them.

In common social practice freedom of conscience often implies a person's right to choose at his own discretion any religion as his ethical system and worship accordingly or to follow no religion and be an atheist.

In the socialist countries, freedom of conscience is one of the major constitutional rights. The realisation of this right is founded on the separation of the church from the state. Consequently, unlike countries in which an *official* religion exists (e.g. Iran, Pakistan), there is no compulsory religious instruction in the schools, no national religious holidays are observed, and so on. Simultaneously, the church in socialist countries may carry on propaganda for its religion and believers may join in religious worship, perform religious rites, and so on, on the one hand, while public organisations, political parties, scientific societies and private persons may carry on atheist propaganda and show the unsubstantiated and unsound nature of religious conceptions and the harm caused by religious beliefs to every believer's active position in life, on the other.

As for the question as to whether a believer may

be a member of the Communist party, this matter, as Lenin noted long ago, should be decided on the strength of the fact that religion, faith in God, is no more than a distorted reflection in people's consciousness of the real natural and social forces dominating them, a reflection whereby these perfectly earthly forces appear to the mind as celestial, divine, and so on. Since in order to eliminate this distorted perception it is of primary importance to remove from real life the domination over man of alienated forces of nature and society, the question asked above is decided accordingly. Namely, if a believer wants to join the Party to add his efforts to the people's struggle against the exploitation of man by man, against men being dominated by the social forces of their own creation but which have become alienated from them, such a believer may be admitted to the Party, as it will strengthen the struggle against social evil and so against the main social roots of religion. If, however, a believer wants to join the Party to carry on religious propaganda in it, thus sowing division among its ranks and weakening the working people's onslaught on social evil and so strengthening the social support of religion, such a believer should not be admitted to the Party.

In this connection one has to allow for the changes occurring in society as a result of the exploiters' rule having been overthrown and socialism built. In a situation where the social roots of religion have been removed, the most important thing is the dissemination of scientific knowledge and well-argued demonstration of the unsoundness and harmfulness of various forms of religious devotion.

What is the aim of socialism? When and by whom was the socialist ideal first formulated?

Viewed in terms of world history and in comparison with other social structures, socialism essentially and ideally is a society of social justice, indeed, it is the most equitable social system. Its very aim is to remove social injustice from every area of social life. As the greatest social injustice is the exploitation of man by man, its abolition is the main feature of socialism. As to how it corresponds to the interests of different classes and social groups, socialism is the first phase of the realisation of the social ideal of the working class and all working people, the ideal which lies in communism.

The social ideal of the working class, as a more or less complete picture of the future socialist (and communist) society, does not emerge at once, like Athena from the head of Zeus. It forms bit by bit, improving all the time, until it finally takes the shape of the genuine picture (or model) of the new society. The understanding of how, during the creative development of scientific communism by Marx, Engels, Lenin and the continuators of their cause, the scientific conception of socialism took shape, is extremely important as it makes it possible to see clearly the theoretical sources of some practical mistakes and distortions in socialist development (when, for instance, the means are represented as the goal, etc.) and to form a better idea of the object of some discussions in the communist movement.

Just as in any developing social ideal—this most intricate form of consciousness “anticipating”

practice—the *means*, major social *tasks*, social *goals* and the social *ideal* itself *were not differentiated* at first in the working-class ideal: abolition of private ownership, abolition of the exploitation of man by man, the building of classless society, the establishment of communism initially appear as identical expressions of the social ideal.

It is indisputable that even this undifferentiated social ideal already contained the kernels of many important truths, but just the kernels, which had not yet sprouted. For this conception of the future was, understandably enough, only approximate. Until all the trends inherent in the objective development of the productive forces and production relations have been fully displayed, and until some practical experience (or sufficient experience) has been gained in implementing the social ideal, it is not at all surprising that major social tasks, social goals and the social ideal are equated. Very often a social goal or long-term objective—e.g. the abolition of private ownership—is depicted as the social ideal, the more so as while private ownership prevails, the social ideal cannot, indeed, be carried out. Only later is it discovered that not all social goals (the abolition of exploitation, elimination of class distinctions, elimination of commodity-money relations, and so on) have the same significance to the socialist ideal, and the latter itself, as it grows more exact, loses some old, and acquires some new, features.

For the sake of clarity, let us see how socialism, the social ideal of the working class, correlates with its social goals of abolishing the exploitation of man by man and establishing a classless society. Although the workers' socialist ideal can-

not be carried out without attaining the social goal of abolishing the exploitation of man by man, yet the two are not the same thing. Exploitation can be abolished by ending the private capitalist ownership of the means of production, with private ownership based on one's own work remaining.

In this case the socialist ideal has not yet been carried out. Nor is it attained while private ownership of all kinds of the means of production has disappeared and all means of production have been socialised but the productive forces still remain at a low level. Other alternatives are also possible. For instance, the social goal of establishing a classless society may still be unattained, when the socialist ideal has already been realised in the main. We may note in passing that initially, when the concepts of the first phase of communism were still taking shape, both social goals referred to—the abolition of exploitation of man by man and the establishment of classless society—were inseparable from the socialist ideal, very often being identified with it. The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* states that the “theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.” (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, 1976, London, p. 498.)

But when it is a question of scientific prediction, correctly defining the general line of development, then the long-term objectives and social goals, seen at first as the social ideal, are being realised in the proper direction. For all that, the emerging difference in the relation of these tasks and goals to the social ideal may give rise to unexpected problems and even to serious practical mistakes. It turns out that there was no basis for

and it was too early to carry out the social goals of, for instance, abolishing private ownership, class distinctions and commodity-money relations altogether, which were considered to be the tasks and goals of the given social ideal but were actually the goals of a more distant ideal or were related to the given ideal differently than had been thought. History attests not only to the complexity, but also to the great significance of differentiating correctly between the *immediate*, socialist ideal and the *more distant*, communist ideal.

The concrete historical way in which the social ideal of the working class developed was complex, with major landmarks and limits both before and during its practical realisation. By and large, the social ideal of the working class developed and improved in such a way that the ideal itself became more definite, the tasks and goals associated with it were differentiated, and the socialist and communist ideals, as well as the tasks and goals corresponding to them and the ways and means of achieving them, were ever more clearly distinguished.

One should stress that the socialist ideal only during and as a result of its practical realisation may become a model which fully reflects the inter-relationship between the final goals and the methods necessary for their realisation.

Can private property exist under socialism?

We have already mentioned that the abolition of private ownership of the means of production

and realisation of the socialist ideal, although closely related, are not identical.

The founders of scientific communism held that the private ownership of the means of production, and thus the private sector of the economy, were historically doomed by the very course of development of the productive forces, which imperatively called for the socialisation of production. In their view, the economic content of the revolutionary passage to the first phase of communism, i.e. to socialism, with its productive forces and social relations and its system of socio-economic and ethical principles, was the abolition of private property and its replacement by collective, public property.

But, in proving that socialism and private property were incompatible, Marx, Engels and Lenin always maintained that *private capitalist property*, on which rests the exploitation of man by man, and *private property based on one's own work*, were far from the same thing.

It follows from history that this differentiation is exceedingly significant in socio-economic, socio-political and practical terms.

In order to do away with the system of exploitation of man by man one has to abolish private capitalist property, rather than private property based on one's own work. Private capitalist property is the source of the existence of the upper and middle bourgeoisie who are the chief adversaries of the working class. Private property based on one's own work, however, is the source of the existence of the petty bourgeoisie, of the middle sections, which are the workers' allies. Therefore, private capitalist property should be expropriated,

confiscated or bought out (expropriation of the expropriators). Private property based on one's own work should not be expropriated. Its owners are workers. It can only be amalgamated, socialised, and that with the free consent of its owners.

Drawing a line between the two main forms of private property does not cancel the problems involved in the development—which occurs under certain conditions—of private property based on one's own work into private capitalist property or deny their common proprietary influence on the system of production relations and social relations at large, and on man's interests, aspirations and consciousness. It does not cancel the fact that the character of work, the system of values and the entire active life of the owners of private property are at odds with collectivism, with socialist principles.

The experience of socialist development in the Soviet Union and then in other countries, which has confirmed the truth of the fundamental Marxist-Leninist precepts in this field, has simultaneously shown the need for specifying and developing further these primary concepts. This experience has shown that socialism implies above all putting an end to the system of exploitation of man by man. Although this leads to the abolition of private property, it does not mean that socialism cannot be attained until the last small artisan, small farmer and small shopkeeper have vanished from the historical scene.

Without attempting to consider the matter in all its aspects, let us touch upon merely some of them and discover what the content and role of the pri-

vate sector are, and what prospects it has, in the conditions of socialist development.

This sector, inherited from the exploiter society, is the part of the national economy in which the producer, who is simultaneously a worker and a private property owner, depends for his income directly on his own industry, enterprise and initiative as well as on the kind of the property he owns and the socio-economic circumstances of his activity. Beyond the early stages of the transitional period, this private sector is usually connected with agriculture (individual private farms), the craft industry (private repair shops, tailor's, shoemaker's, barber's, cleaner's), and with retail trade (private shops, catering establishments, restaurants, cafes, etc.).

The private sector based on personal work has a contradictory *socio-economic nature*. Here private ownership and work, the conditions of work and its results are opposites. The individual involved in this part of the economy embodies the self-contradictory unity of private owner and worker. His private property is the condition of his work, and his socially necessary labour is not only isolated and individualised, but also subjected to the immediate personal end of reproducing and multiplying private property.

The revolutionary transformation of capitalist into socialist society demands a definite attitude towards this economic structure. So long as it is a structure producing socially necessary values in use which are often not provided by other structures, and so long as it is a sector of the economy in which the means of livelihood are obtained by work and in which the small producers, who are the

workers' natural allies, are engaged, the working class fighting for socialism cannot set itself the task of destroying this structure by force. The workers' policy in this respect is to put to use all the positive potential of this structure in the interests of society and socialist development, restricting its negative effect on the latter, drawing the small producers into tackling the common problems, and providing the essential material and spiritual conditions for the gradual socialisation of small private property and its replacement by collective, socialist property.

The private sector, unsocialised production, run by individuals in business for themselves, continues to operate, on a varying scale, in all European socialist countries. In 1970 the share of the private sector in national income amounted to 0.3 per cent in Bulgaria, 1.9 per cent in Hungary, 14.4 per cent in the GDR, 25.2 per cent in Poland, 0.8 per cent in Czechoslovakia, 3.8 per cent in Romania, and 19.8 per cent in Yugoslavia. Quite recently, a number of European socialist countries have succeeded in a more efficient utilisation of private enterprise, especially in personal services. In the GDR, for example, where practically all private and semi-private small and medium-sized businesses were socialised, since the mid-1970s a partial restoration of the private craft industry and small private shops has taken place. On the strength of the resolution of the government of the GDR issued on February 12, 1976, this policy was confirmed and formalised in the Programme of the SUPG, adopted by its 9th Congress later in 1976. In summing up the practical results of this policy, the 10th SUPG Congress, which met in 1981, noted that the

measures "to stimulate the activity of small shopkeepers running second-hand shops, private retailers and owners of small catering establishments and craft shops had been fully justified." (*Neues Deutschland*, April 12, 1981.) In Romania, after an abortive attempt at reviving the private sector in the late 1960s (its share in gross industrial output dropped from 0.5 per cent in 1965 to 0.2 in 1978), a fresh effort was made late in the 1970s and early in the 1980s. Speaking in June 1980, President Ceaușescu set the task of raising the share of small-scale commodity production in gross industrial output from 7.6 per cent in 1979 to 18-20 per cent in 1990. (*Romania Libera*, June 25, 1980.) Much attention is paid to small-scale production (including private production) in Poland and Yugoslavia. It is successfully functioning in Hungary. The report of the HSWP Central Committee to the 12th Congress of the Party stressed that small-scale private industry and trade should help improve the supply of goods and services for the Hungarian population within the limits of the real requirements.

It may be asked at this point: if private property and the private sector based on personal work can exist also in socialist countries, what are the general prospects for the private sector there?

Undoubtedly the private sector under consideration is a temporary socio-economic phenomenon in the conditions of socialist reforms and socialist development. Yet its duration, the historical limits of its existence, cannot be identical in different countries. From the standpoint of objective circumstances, it is determined by the character of the private sector itself, its socio-economic role in

each specific country, on the one hand, and by the extent to which socialism is developed there and by how capable it is of assuming and carrying out more profitably and efficiently the functions that previously the private sector has performed, on the other. Therefore, so long as the private sector expands, and meets the socially necessary demands which cannot as yet be developed and satisfied by the socialist sector for certain objective reasons, such as insufficient capital investment, the limited and peculiar character of demand, no opportunity for amalgamating the small producers, and so on, this sector remains, in economic terms, a historical necessity, irrespective of how far the society as a whole has advanced.

Disappearance of the private sector based on personal work must essentially be a natural historical process, induced by objective causes. In other words, the private sector in question should not be abolished by decree or artificially restricted before its potential has been exhausted, but should be allowed naturally to dwindle to nothing as the further employment of the individual labour, initiative and enterprise of private owners in a particular field becomes ineffective since their functions are carried out more efficiently by the socialist sector by which they are displaced and in which they find better conditions for their own growth as workers.

Do contradictions exist under socialism, and if so, what are they and how are they resolved?

Marxists hold, as they have always held, that contradictions are inherent in all phenomena of

nature, society and thought, and that they are the source of development, while knowledge of them was and remains the central object of Marxist dialectics. Lenin wrote that "dialectics in the proper sense is the study of contradictions in the very essence of things." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 227, Russian edition.)

Turning to the problem of the contradictions of socialism as a social system, science enters a field where it has for its subject not the results obtained in the course of social development, but the development itself, its internal impulses, driving forces and the conflict of opposing trends and divergent social strivings.

For Marxist-Leninists, the study of the contradictions of socialism as a social system is necessary not as an end in itself, but as a major condition for the successful development of real socialism. As contradictions are the source of development, ignoring them and shying away from their examination are tantamount to neglecting this most important factor. This badly damages the new social system, as it can result in deformations of socialism and crisis situations. Here is a case in point. The 9th Extraordinary PUWP Congress, which analysed the underlying causes of the practical distortions of socialist principles, i.e. deformation of socialism, that had led to a political and economic crisis in Poland, noted: "The violation of the principles of socialism, the emergence of pressure groups and a growing discrepancy between the level of the productive forces and the economic, social and political structures, were essentially due to the fact that there was no clear conception of how to resolve the contradictions which arose throughout

the thirty-year period in socio-economic relations. These contradictions, which were the natural outcome of the historical conditions of Poland's development and of the initial state of society and the economy, demanded a consistent socio-economic strategy taking all these elements into account." (*Materials of the 9th Extraordinary PUWP Congress*, Warsaw, 1981.) The PUWP had no such strategy. Public opinion was swayed by the theory of the "conflict-free" character of the new social system, of the non-contradictory development of socialism. The former PUWP leaders, who succeeded one another in bearing personal responsibility for the mounting deformation of socialism, went to extremes, trying to cope with the growing difficulties and obvious contradictions by extraordinary measures. But the absence of any clear, integral conception of how to resolve contradictions, and incompetence in vital matters of socio-economic and social development, as well as an inability, due to undialectical thinking, to find the correct way out of the situation, resulted in crisis following crisis: "In spite of the peculiar and specific features marking the separate crises, their results were the same—an economic crisis and a social conflict." (*Materials of the 9th Extraordinary PUWP Congress*.)

Important and necessary as it is to study the contradictions of socialism as a social system, one should not overlook the complexity of such study. This complexity lies not only in its being a highly responsible matter, where any inaccuracy can entail some harmful social effect and can damage the investigation itself, but also in the fact that at the most diverse levels of public opinion the primitive,

narrow-minded notion of contradictions as something "abnormal" and "unnatural" to socialism is still widely current.

Lenin wrote long ago that antagonism and contradiction were not the same thing; the former would wither away, and the latter would remain under socialism (cf., *Collected Notes XI*, p. 17, Russian edition). Since then, practice not only has corroborated the truth of Lenin's words, but has put forward many new questions related to contradictions in the internal and international development of real socialism. The CPSU documents stress: "...the present-day socialist world, with its successes and prospects, with all its problems, is still a young and growing social organism, where not everything has settled and where much still bears the marks of earlier historical epochs. The socialist world is forging ahead and is continuously improving. Its development naturally runs through struggle between the new and the old, through the resolution of internal contradictions." (*24th Congress of the CPSU*, Moscow, 1971, p. 19.)

What, then, are the contradictions of socialism as a social system and how are they resolved?

Looking at the contradictions of socialism, we must first of all distinguish between *two types*: (1) contradictions which are naturally inherent in socialism and are the objective source, impulse and driving force of its development and (2) contradictions which are not engendered by socialism's own nature but result from subjectivism, from wrong policy. The latter may lead in socialist society to the excessive growth of some and a gradual loss of other elements of the socio-economic organism, to the emergence and proliferation in socialist society

of abnormalities and deformations running counter to its nature. Springing each time from concrete historical roots and usually being a parasitic growth on the real processes and contradictions inherent in socialist development, these abnormalities and deformations find support among certain social groups. Where this happens, contradictions may become antagonistic and their resolution may take the shape of a socio-political conflict.

Approaching from this general standpoint the contradictions of socialism as a social system, it seems of importance to identify its *main contradiction* and the *contradictions in the economic and political sphere*.

The *main contradiction* of socialism is the contradiction which is inherent in the socialist mode of production, namely, the contradiction between society's growing productive forces and the existing system of the socialist relations of production, with its specific forms of socialist property, and the entire economic system, with its stable forms of distribution, exchanges and consumption and its methods of planning, management and incentives. Every significant advance in the development of the productive forces of socialism requires the adjustment and improvement of the system of socialist production relations, for in the absence of appropriate changes in this sphere the development of productive forces will be inevitably held back and economic growth rates will progressively diminish.

Besides this main contradiction, socialism is marked also by *contradictions in production and consumption*. The level of social production under

socialism is not yet high enough to meet all vital human needs. For this reason, society has to concentrate its material resources and its main efforts on multiplying further the material elements of production, that is, it has to withdraw a part of its resources for accumulation. It can meet the growing material and cultural needs of the working people by distributing only the remaining part and, above all, on the principle "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work." In other words, the social needs connected with the rapid buildup of the productive forces come before the daily increasing personal needs.

This contradiction between social and personal needs, consumption by production and by individuals, between long-term social goals and personal daily needs exists at all stages of the socialist phase, whereby a proper *balance* has to be found at each of them between consumption by production and individuals, between the satisfaction of social and individual interests. Finding this balance is one of the most important practical tasks on whose correct solution depend both political stability and the very rate of social progress under socialism.

There are also contradictions in the *political sphere*. It can hardly be disputed that the real contradiction in the development of the political organisation of society under socialism was and still is that between extending democracy and building up centralism, between the need for citizens to be more directly involved, as masters of their country, in the exercise of power, on the one hand, and the growing role of skilled and competent centralised guidance and management of public affairs—production, political, social, and so on—on the other.

Because of this contradiction in the development of the political system of socialism it becomes necessary to determine the exact balance between democracy and centralism at every stage and in every country, not to allow democratic centralism to become bureaucratic centralism or anarchic decentralisation.

These are the basic aspects of the contradictions under socialism, of their character and of the ways of resolving them.

Can there be economic crises under socialism? Was what they called a political and economic crisis in Poland the same kind of economic crisis as is usual in capitalist countries?

Economic crises of overproduction are the natural accompaniments of capitalism, deriving from the uncontrolled development of the capitalist economy, with its contradiction between the social character of production and the private capitalist mode of appropriation of its results. The drop in production and mass unemployment, which occur during economic crises and lie as a heavy burden on the working class and all working people, are equally natural to capitalism.

Economic crises are not inherent in the nature of socialism, its economy, in which the social character of production is matched by public ownership and the social appropriation of the results of production. Even so, the lessons of the development of real socialism show that under certain conditions production may be disrupted and an economic crisis may occur in socialist countries as well. This was just what happened in Poland. Nevertheless, it

should be pointed out at once that such a crisis in a socialist country has an entirely different content, other causes, and develops in a different way from a capitalist crisis. The ways out of the crisis are also different.

First of all, it is especially worth noting that the causes of an economic crisis, if it indeed occurs in a socialist country, do not lie in the nature of the socialist economy, but in discretionary, erroneous policy which fails to take into account objective economic laws and the interests of the working people. The socialist economy can only be disrupted by a mistaken policy. The Polish Communists gave the following assessment of the causes of the economic and political crisis in Poland: "A decisive role in the advancing process of the deformation of the machinery of socialist society and the state in the 1970s played the violation of the principles of justice—the principal yardstick of socio-economic policy and people's power, and also of democracy—the basic form of implementing authority. The fact that the wrong yardsticks were applied and the goods and benefits were distributed inequitably promoted the emergence of privileged sections and pressure groups in society, which brought influence to bear on the levers of power, bringing about the distortion of the leading role of the Party and of the ways of functioning of the government." (*The 9th Congress of the PUWP.*) These deformations in the sphere of administration, the Polish Communists noted, had their inevitable consequence: violation of the principle of social justice "from the policy of putting certain groups in a privileged position spread to socio-economic policy as a whole, whereby privileges were granted to some sectors of

the economy, industries and regions. This was accompanied by excessive capital investments, mistakes and inconsistency in agrarian policy, and rapidly growing foreign debt. All this resulted in a serious dislocation of the economy, which found expression, above all, in the balance of the internal market being upset, stagnation in agriculture, and disintegration of the system of management and inter-branch co-operation." (*Ibid.*)

Plainly enough, the economic crisis, the disorganisation of the Polish economy, did not stem from any intrinsic defects of socialism, but resulted from gross miscalculations and blunders made by the political leadership, who had led the national economy into a dead-end. The way out of this situation is, naturally, to pursue a sound economic policy, based on science, and carry out measures aimed at eliminating imbalances and other negative developments in the economic field.

Why is the standard of living of working people higher in some capitalist countries than in the socialist countries?

Briefly, it is because the labour efficiency in industry and agriculture in some capitalist countries (the United States, Britain, West Germany, France, Italy and Japan) is still much higher than the labour efficiency in the socialist countries. A more detailed answer would be that over the time of its existence capitalism has created powerful productive forces, a huge industrial machine, which produces high-quality output at low cost. The workers' movement in the developed capitalist countries is sufficiently well organised to prevent the capitalists, the bourgeoisie, from in-

creasing their profits by drastically lowering wages.

Most of the socialist revolutions occurred in countries where capitalism was not yet greatly developed, where powerful productive forces had not yet been provided, and the people's standard of living was not high (Czechoslovakia and the GDR are the exceptions). For this reason, the popular governments in these countries had to practise austerity for many years so as to find the necessary means for promoting the economy, education and culture. Naturally, all this, as well as having to spend a significant proportion of material resources on defence, on necessary protection against aggressive encroachments by imperialism, has not allowed the socialist countries to raise the people's standard of living so much as to exceed the standard of living of the working people in all advanced capitalist countries.

For all that, vital successes have been scored by the socialist countries in this respect as well. Both production and consumption in the socialist countries increase, as a rule, at a rate much higher than in the capitalist countries. In 1976, for instance, as compared with 1950, the consumption fund in the CMEA countries increased about 5.2 times, rising by roughly a third in the period from 1971 to 1975 alone. In per capita terms, the consumption fund increased in 1976, as against 1950, about 5.2 times in Bulgaria, 3.2 times in Hungary, 5.2 times in the GDR, four times in Poland, 5.1 times in Romania, 3.7 times in the Soviet Union, and three times in Czechoslovakia. Per capita personal consumption in 1975 exceeded that in 1950 by 62 per cent in the United States, 2.8 times

in Britain, and three times in West Germany. Moreover, in the capitalist countries the standard of living of the mass of the population drops periodically, especially during recessions. Thus in 1975 in the United States, because of the economic crisis, real wages dropped to the 1964 level while food consumption in 1974 did not exceed the 1967 level.

It is also worth noting that the long-term planning of the people's living standards in the socialist countries is not done with an eye on the standards of living in the capitalist countries, but proceeds from a rational consumer budget bringing together the rates of consumption of various goods and services. It is, if one may say so, a kind of scientific standard of the level and structure of consumption, which provides for the full satisfaction of consumer needs. How soon these targets can be reached is determined by the volume of goods and services (in average per capita terms) now available for consumption and by the planned increase in the latter. Estimates show that given favourable conditions of long-term growth in consumption, the gap between the rational standard consumer budget and the present volume of personal consumption will be closed in the European CMEA countries towards the end of the century. This will happen even sooner than that in the more economically advanced of them.

How full are social justice and social equality under socialism?

Before answering this question, we must first elucidate what should be understood by social justice.

The founders of scientific communism, in view of the fact that man is a social being, held that "All questions that concern the relations of men with each other are therefore also social questions." (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 321.)

In other words, *social relations* are the sum total of all relations between men as social beings (economic, political, moral, ideological, family and other relations), which they enter into in making human history. Depending on whether the parties concerned are on an equal or on an unequal footing (e.g., both parties co-operate without exploiting or oppressing each other and equally take part in administration; or one is the exploiting and the other is the exploited party, one oppresses and the other is oppressed, one is engaged solely in government and the other is merely governed, and so on), social relations may be *just* or *unjust*. Consequently, the justice, as well as the injustice, of these relations may extend to the most diverse areas of social life.

The march of human history which tore men away, step by step, from family relations and subjected them to domination by social forces which they themselves had created, the emergence of private ownership of the means of production, the division of society into rich and poor, exploiters and the exploited, those who are governed and those who govern, those who work and those who need not work not only buried the ancestral notions of justice, but led to a gradual awareness of the essence of social justice in class society, an awareness which deepened with time. Most important of all, people began to fight for

carrying into practice this social justice of which they came to be ever more conscious. In other words, the awareness of social injustice or justice, "just as much as the consciousness of equality, are historical products." (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 479.) What was just under certain conditions, became its opposite, unjust, under different conditions and vice versa. Thus, in primitive society, with its low labour productivity, warring tribes killed their prisoners. This was considered just because no sustenance could be provided for them. Later, when human labour began to yield just a little more than what was necessary to sustain life, it came to be considered unjust to kill prisoners of war. In conditions of low labour productivity and a dearth of basic necessities, the principle of egalitarian distribution (wage levelling) is socially just, as it serves to support man, the main productive force. In other conditions, this same principle is socially unjust, as it rules out any incentive to raise labour productivity. The principle of distribution of products according to work, socially just in socialist society, is not so under communism, and so on.

The ideas of social justice changed also in other areas of social life. Direct democracy, which was practised in small communities of people, where it allowed everybody to take an equal part in administering public affairs, with time, as the population increased and administration grew more complex, came to be regarded as an obsolete, cumbersome anachronism, superseded everywhere by the apparently more just and more convenient indirect representational democracy.

Such changes, where convenience was often substituted for justice and real equality was displaced by nominal equal rights, not only did not blunt, but, on the contrary, heightened the sense of social injustice and intensified opposition to it. Moreover, the concept of social justice not only became more profound, but also more comprehensive. It was becoming ever more obvious that all social relations were interdependent and influenced each other, that justice in the political field could not be obtained if the economy was left intact, that the demand for "social as well as political equality" (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 7.) had also to be realised.

Revolutionary action by working people—slaves and serfs, the "third estate"—leading to fundamental changes in the prevailing mode of production, altered in one way or another the social status and social rights of different sections of society and generated new aspects of the problem of social justice. Thus, with the establishment of capitalism, which removed class privileges and the remnants of feudalism, it became clear that, unless capitalist exploitation was abolished in a revolutionary way and the bourgeois order destroyed, any further progress of social justice and social equality was impossible.

The socialist revolution and the establishment of socialism have removed the main social injustice, exploitation, and the main social inequality, the inequality between exploiters and the exploited. It would, however, be wrong to think that all problems of social injustice and inequality have already been resolved under socialism.

In this connection it is of fundamental significance to have a correct idea of and a correct attitude to the facts of social injustice found in socialist society. A good deal of talk, and often discontent too, is aroused by facts of notable differences in people's financial circumstances, living conditions and various other aspects of the standard of living, the difference which tells on the way of life of separate groups of the people. These questions must not be treated simplistically, for there are different dimensions of justice and injustice.

Socialism, as the first phase of the new society, *cannot*, due to the level of its development, remove the "injustices" expressed in the unequal well-being of different groups of citizens. This depends on the unequal amount and quality of work they contribute, on their family circumstances, for a family of two, both of whom work, is one thing, and a family in which one wage earner has to maintain several children, is quite another, and so on. Pointing out these circumstances, Lenin explained that the "first phase of communism... cannot yet provide justice and equality: differences, and unjust differences, in wealth will still persist..." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 471.) The difference in the standard of living and way of life between highly skilled and, therefore, highly paid, and unskilled members of society who get low wages, which arises from these circumstances, cannot be removed under socialism, however unjust it may appear.

At the same time, there are injustices of another kind, where sharp distinctions in the standard of living and way of life do not result from equally

significant differences in the amount of work contributed. Instances are often cited in the Soviet press and the press of other socialist countries, of people living beyond their means, where certain citizens—some of them deriving unearned income from profiteering, theft and all sorts of machinations, other making a good thing of their official position, cooking accounts and cheating—live in luxury. This naturally arouses the indignation of every honest worker, to say nothing of those who earn just enough to make both ends meet.

Anxious to find the sources of such injustices and to bar their emergence and spread in socialist society, some working people who believe that all this is the consequence of distribution according to the amount and quality of work and the result of commodity-money relations continuing in society suggest that the reasons from which the injustices may spring should be abolished, that is, they are for abolishing commodity-money relations, replacing material incentives to work by an equal distribution of goods, and so on. At first sight, this approach seems attractively effective. Indeed, should the unequal distribution of material goods, and commodity-money relations in general, be abolished, such abnormalities would have no place. All inequality in people's material well-being, in the standard of living, would disappear.

Yet to follow this course would mean undermining the very principles of the development of socialism as a social system, barring the way to the really just solution of problems concerning the standard of living. As a matter of fact, the roots and causes of the abnormalities mentioned above do not lie in the material incentives to do

good work, payment according to the amount and quality of work or the existence of commodity-money relations under socialism. Commodity-money relations under socialism do not by themselves engender either profiteering, theft or the abuse of authority to obtain material goods. They merely create the possibility of such aberrations, which becomes a fact only when the principles of socialism are violated, when the principle of distribution according to work is violated, when personal property is increased by embezzlement, when one's official position is exploited for private ends. These are just the things which run counter to all the rules of socialism.

It is enough to examine any instance of such injustice running counter to the nature of socialism, to be convinced that it has resulted from deviation from the socialist principle of distribution by taking advantage of different loopholes or, more directly, by stealing public property or robbing people through profiteering, graft, and so on. In either case it is not a product of socialism, but the outcome of omissions and shortcomings in the work of the authorities, public organisations and the working people themselves, whose job it is to expose and suppress such occurrences. It is on eliminating these omissions and shortcomings that attention must be focused. The way of life of all working people must become a socialist one.

On what principles are relations between different nationalities regulated in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries?

At the present time mankind consists of a vast number of big and small, long-established or

emerging communities—nations, nationalities and ethnic groups inhabiting national and multinational states, sovereign countries or countries fighting for their independence. To be exact, there are now in the world more than a thousand nations and nationalities, besides a great number of national minorities, ethnic groups and tribes. By far the greater part of them are incorporated in multinational countries and countries non-uniform in the social and ethnic respect. In the socialist countries alone there are at present about 250 big and small nations and nationalities.

National relations form an important part of contemporary social relations. In the broad sense, they show the character of the relationships that become established both within every nation and nationality and between them. Intranational relations are relations between different groups of the population—territorial, ethnic and class groups—within the national community itself. Essentially, they are concerned with the existence and the ways of development of a given community. Relations between nations are not confined to the limits of a multinational state; they also presuppose relations between the peoples of different countries.

Under socialism, these relations, in contrast to antagonistic relations based on domination and on the subjection of the weak to the strong, develop on new principles as a *new type of national and international relations*. At their basis is the effective right to self-determination, equal rights and sovereignty, the solidarity and mutual assistance of all peoples, expressing the essence of the new socio-economic and political system and the ideological socialist foundations of nations. By

abolishing the exploiting classes, socialism sweeps away the social class barriers in the path of progressive ethnic development and the social roots of national strife. It brings forth new objective factors in the economy and politics, which remove the causes of conflicts between nations, promoting their convergence and the surmounting of national partitions, and furthers the real solution of the nationalities' question.

At the same time, social practice has disproved the simplistic notion that, as soon as socialism has been firmly established, all national problems will disappear by themselves.

The emergence of nations and of the new type of national relations, and the extension of inter-governmental ties between socialist countries, as practice has shown, is not immune from difficulties and contradictions, manifestations of great-power chauvinism and local nationalism. The peoples of the socialist countries did not embark on building socialism all at the same time. There are countries in the world socialist system in which the new social system has not yet finally triumphed. The levels of political, economic and cultural development of the nations are marked by certain differences. For a whole range of objective and subjective reasons, socialist principles are not always implemented consistently in national development and in socialism's international contacts. Sometimes a desire is manifested for the artificial reuniting of national minorities which historically were divided and now live in different socialist countries, which shows that the socio-class approach to ethnic problems has been forgotten. A one-sided emphasis on specific national features in

the development of some socialist countries, treating this development in isolation from the international tasks and needs of social progress, and other manifestations of national narrow-mindedness and national egoism still make themselves felt.

Such facts weaken the cohesion of the working people of the socialist nations and their positive potential as builders of the new society, on the one hand, while holding back national development through isolating a given people from fruitful co-operation with other nationalities and peoples. All this shows that the task of firmly establishing the new type of international relations combining the national and the international is not a simple one. But although there are in the socialist world disagreements and contradictions between nations, peoples and states, given correct policy on the part of the ruling parties, they can be and are being overcome.

Many countries in Europe, Asia and Latin America are now countries of socialism. What do the concepts of world socialism, the world socialist system and the world socialist community mean? Do they mean one and the same thing?

No, they do not. Each of these concepts has a content and meaning of its own. The broadest of them is the concept of *world socialism*.

The concept of *world socialism*, is, to be exact, a collective one. It means all the countries of real socialism together, the socialist gains won in the socialist-oriented countries, and socialism as an

ideological-political movement, i.e. the movement proceeding under the banners of Marxism-Leninism, of scientific communism.

It is not hard to see that the concept of world socialism comprises different elements, but that all of them are bound together by the socialist ideal which has been realised in some instances, is being realised in others, and inspires and rallies the masses to fight for its realisation in others still.

It is important to stress that this concept neither contains nor implies any specific *organizational* structure of the elements of which it is made up, although it presupposes their *ideological* relationship, their interdependence and reciprocal support.

The concepts of the *world socialist system* and the *world socialist community* are more rigid. What does each of these concepts mean? What is the content of the phenomena they represent?

First of all, let us note that the formation and development of the *world socialist system* is a fairly long and complex process, for the revolutionary transformation of exploiting into socialist society occurs within national limits, within the boundaries of separate countries, and it does not occur at one and the same time everywhere. This determines in advance many characteristic features of the world socialist system as such throughout the world revolutionary process. Let us dwell on the more important of these characteristics.

First, the world socialist system, forming and developing as individual countries break away from capitalism, is not a single, undifferentiated whole, not a single state that has extended its

borders, but a community of socialist countries *of the same type*, which are independent sovereign states, each with its own territory, economy, political organisation, culture, and so on.

Secondly, the world socialist system, which is a community of socialist states of the same type, is *not a community of identical countries*, uniform in socio-economic terms. The world socialist system includes countries which earlier occupied different places in the capitalist system, with varying level of economic and political development and the extent of progress achieved in industry and farming, having fairly different economic and political structures, their own history, their own traditions.

Thirdly, the world socialist system is not an exclusive entity. It is an *open* community, joined by more and more countries. Thus, in addition to the Soviet Union and Mongolia, the socialist path was taken in the late 1940s by Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Albania, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They were followed in 1949 by the People's Republic of China and the German Democratic Republic, in 1955 by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and in 1960 by Cuba. The expansion of the world socialist system is the inevitable result of the natural progress of the struggle of the masses. This process will be completed only when all the countries of the world have passed over to the path of socialism. The 1970s were a major landmark in the growth of the world socialist system. After the reunification of Vietnam, South Vietnam, too, has become a part of the world system, so has Laos, while Kampuchea is taking firmer steps along the socialist path.

What then is the world socialist system today? It is a socio-economic community of all the socialist countries, united by the identity of the path chosen by their peoples, and linked on this path by ties of objective interdependence, the identity of their peoples' fundamental interests and aims, and by the close similarity of their principal political and economic structures, which are developing in accordance with the laws of socialism and communism.

Throughout the history of the development of the world socialist system, the question often arose as to whether the concept referred to all the socialist countries passing through one stage of development or another, when practice provided examples of significant disagreements and even conflicts, as was the case with Yugoslavia late in the 1940s and early in the 1950s or, more recently, with Albania or China. Does the emergence of such conflicts, which destroys co-operation between these countries and other socialist countries, perhaps indicate that these countries have dropped out of the world socialist system, that this system is "disintegrating", as is asserted in bourgeois propaganda?

If "disintegration" can be applied in this case; it is nothing but the disintegration of the primitive concepts of the world socialist system, which attribute the association of the socialist countries in a system solely to the *volitional, deliberate* efforts of their governments and parties, to particular political and economic agreements between socialist countries. Such a concept of the essence of the world socialist system denies the objective character of the relationships which unite the

countries into a system, making the very existence of the world system contingent on people's conscious activity, allegedly able to abolish at will the objective inter-relationships between countries.

To see the fallacy of this kind of approach, let us assume that the leadership of a socialist country has denounced all inter-governmental agreements and even broken off diplomatic relations with all the other socialist countries. This isolationist policy will, no doubt, disrupt consciously organised co-operation. But will this country, remaining socialist, be able to remove the objective community of fundamental interests and aims with other socialist countries? Never. Will, as the result of such actions, the bonds of objective interdependence, binding all socialist countries and rooted in the common historical path they have chosen, cease to exist? They will not. Will this socialist country become isolated from the propitious international conditions created for it by world socialism? Again, it will not. Will it, remaining socialist, stop being the direct opposite of capitalism? If not—and it cannot be anything else—which of the world systems will it belong to? It is not as if there were any third system, besides the socialist and the capitalist world systems. So long as a country remains socialist, it cannot be cut off from the world socialist system just by the foreign policy moves of its leadership.

When, in the world capitalist system, all inter-governmental agreements of any kind between individual countries are broken, even when there occur within this system armed conflicts between its countries or groups of countries, there is no talk of any "disintegration" of the world capitalist

system. Of course, one should not judge the world socialist system by analogy with the capitalist system—in the sense that the former has features and properties highly distinct from those of the latter. Within the former, by dint of the very nature of socialism, there can be no place for such forms of resolving contradictions as are characteristic of the latter. What, however, is important to stress here is that the violation of inter-governmental treaties is one thing, and the disintegration of a system is quite another.

In point of fact, the social ties uniting countries into world systems are of an objective character which, all things considered, is determined by the internationalisation of the industrial as well as all social life of mankind today. The objective bonds and inter-dependence between all countries of the world in the age of the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism are the objective bonds and inter-dependence between countries in each of the two world systems. These relationships within a system are the material frame binding all socialist countries into an integral whole, irrespective of the subjective idea the leadership of any country may have of the inter-dependence between all socialist countries, of how the interests of socialism and of the country concerned are understood, and irrespective of how correctly that country's allies and adversaries are assessed. In other words, these relationships within a system not only do not depend on the will and consciousness of the leadership, but, on the contrary, continuously act on its will and consciousness, compelling it to reckon at least with the country's objective situation, with the objective

inter-dependence between all socialist countries, and with the objective community of vital interests and goals of their peoples.

Whereas the world socialist system is the socio-economic community of all socialist countries linked by the ties of objective inter-dependence, the *community of the socialist countries* or the *world socialist community* is not a simple association of all socialist countries nor even an ordinary alliance of states, but an *essentially new* historical fact. Here it is not enough to speak merely of the objective inter-dependence between socialist countries. Only the correct scientific *understanding* of the objective inter-dependence of the socialist countries, of the community of vital interests and goals of these countries' peoples and only, and most importantly, the *pursuit of an internationalist policy* by all socialist states, determine not the "creation" of a world socialist system—for it exists regardless of people's will and consciousness, as an objectively given socio-economic community of all socialist countries—but an *addition* to the objective relationships of *consciously organised* political and economic co-operation, of reciprocal aid leading to the conversion of the world socialist system into a community of socialist countries. And this community is, indeed, a form of development of the world socialist system fully corresponding to socialism.

Practice shows, however, that this form is not an absolute one. If the principles of Marxism-Leninism are distorted in the home and foreign policy of one of the socialist countries, there is dangerous deformation and undermining of the foundations of the socialist gains in the country,

impairing in its foreign relations the close inter-governmental ties characteristic of socialism. A disruption of internationalist co-operation and brotherly assistance by separate socialist countries within the world socialist system, whether long or short, undermines their friendship with other fraternal countries and may result in those countries breaking away from the community. It cannot, however, mean their breaking away from the world socialist system, for that could only happen after the degeneration—petty-bourgeois or capitalist—of the country concerned.

It follows from all this that the criteria of a country's affiliation to the world socialist system do not coincide with the criteria by which it belongs to the community of socialist countries and also that the most important indicator of a country's membership of this community is the co-ordinated implementation by it, together with the other countries, of the principles of socialist internationalism.

But if the world socialist system is a socio-economic community comprising all socialist countries, then how many and what countries are included today in the world socialist system?

This is not an idle question for at least three reasons. First of all, there are today countries like the USSR, the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, which are called socialist as socialism has already been built in them. At the same time, there are countries like Cuba, Vietnam and Laos (which are also called socialist countries), where the transition to socialism is just being implemented. Moreover, in Laos, to say nothing of Kampuchea,

this process is still at its earliest stage. Secondly, there are now in the world not a few socialist-oriented countries, that is, such as intend to move towards socialism. These are not only Syria and Algeria, for example, in which revolutionary democrats are in power, but also Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Afghanistan and the Democratic People's Republic of Yemen, which are led by the political vanguard declaring its adherence to the Marxist-Leninist doctrine.

The foregoing question therefore entails finding out what countries and on what grounds should be considered socialist, belonging to the world socialist system.

The paramount criteria by which a country may belong to the world socialist system are a victorious socialist revolution, establishment of government by the workers and all working people led by the Marxist-Leninist vanguard, adoption of the socialist path and development along this path, that is, the criteria are the real gains of socialism. It is, after all, as a result of the revolution and the establishment of the power of the workers and all working people that a country breaks away from the world capitalist system, chooses a socialist path, and comes to share the vital interests of all the other socialist countries, becoming a part of the world socialist system. Once this has been understood, the following conclusions can be drawn.

The first is that what makes a country socialist and a member of the world socialist system is not the accomplishment of socialism in it, but the establishment of socialist government and the fact that it has chosen and started moving along the socialist path. Lenin called post-revolutionary Rus-

sia a country which had dropped out of the capitalist system, and he stressed that it was socialist not in its socio-economic structure (which was a mixed structure at that time), but in the character of power and in its socio-economic goals, i.e. in the essence of its gains and in its chosen path. Consequently, a country that has chosen a socialist path of development, has established socialist government, and is moving towards socialism, becomes a part of the world socialist system, regardless of the stage of socialist development at which it may be.

The second conclusion is that before their development has taken firm steps along their chosen path or, more exactly, before their political power and the content of the reforms have become essentially socialist, socialist-oriented countries cannot be considered part of the world socialist system. They are its major and most immediate reserve, but not its members.

Do socialist countries coordinate their efforts, in what areas and for what ends?

The socialist community countries coordinate their efforts with the object of strengthening unity, and they do so in every field—political (diplomatic and military), economic and ideological. This stems from several circumstances.

Even at the turn of the century, Lenin pointed out that "capitalism's world-historical tendency to break down national barriers, obliterate national distinctions, and to *assimilate* nations... manifests itself more and more powerfully with every

passing decade." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 28.) This tendency is manifesting itself even more powerfully at present. The current technological progress shows that no country can translate into practice single-handed the achievements of science and technology. Making use of these achievements requires joint, united effort on the part of the socialist countries, too. Their industrial ties, coordination of their economic development plans, joint planning, and so on, are extended in every way. All this predetermines the drawing together of the economic structures, and in the historical perspective also of the political structures, of the socialist countries towards the formation of an integral, centrally governed communist entity, without any state boundaries and national partitions.

The socialist world is developing at present, and will develop for quite some time yet, in the context of confrontation between capitalism and socialism. Now that the imperialists resort to "peaceful intervention", economic and political pressure and other subversive methods to bring into their orbit the socialist countries one by one, strengthening the unity of the latter, mutual support and all-round assistance are the first vital necessity.

The successful development of socialism and social progress itself in present-day conditions are inseparable from the preservation of peace. This can be attained only by strengthening socialism's international positions, by maintaining and cementing the unity of the countries of the world socialist system. The peace or nuclear war alternative has not yet been removed from the agenda. Socialism is faced by a powerful enemy prepared

to kindle local wars that may lead to a world thermonuclear catastrophe which would exterminate mankind.

Lastly, the unity of the socialist countries and its consolidation are the indispensable condition of socialism's greater impact on the international situation and the world revolutionary process.

As world socialism is the leading force of social progress and the centre of attraction of all revolutionary movements of the present, the creation of conditions providing for a steady weakening of imperialism's positions and the ultimate victory of the forces of democracy and socialism depends above all on the unity of the countries of the world socialist system. It was due precisely to coordinated action by most of the socialist countries in rendering aid to the Vietnamese people that the gains of socialism in Vietnam were protected and millions more workers in Indochina were able to embark on the socialist path. Thus, besides the formation of the united Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the 1970s saw the victory of the patriotic forces in Laos and the coming to power there of the Marxist-Leninist Lao People's Revolutionary Party. Taking power into their own hands, the working people of the Democratic People's Republic of Laos began to build a new life. In the field of foreign policy, the leadership of the DPRL is steadily pursuing a policy of establishing close relations and fraternal co-operation with the Marxist-Leninist parties and peoples of the socialist countries. All this, the October 1976 CC CPSU Plenary Meeting pointed out, gives one reason to state that "Laos has been yet another addition to the family of the socialist states". The

socialist path is being followed ever more confidently by Kampuchea.

Alongside the long-term factors which dictate the need for the unity of the socialist countries, there are also very important specific circumstances making the strengthening of this unity especially urgent at this time. This is determined by the real state of things in the world socialist system, as well as by the shifts in the system of international relations.

The socialist countries belonging to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance are developing their international integration. What is this integration, particularly in political terms? Will it not affect the national sovereignty of the countries involved?

The economic successes scored by the socialist countries as a result of their co-operation are of great political significance in that they demonstrate the advantages offered by the new, socialist type of international relations. There is, however, yet another aspect of the relationship between the socialist countries' economic co-operation and political problems, which stems from the very character of that co-operation, from the fact that it involves sovereign, politically independent states. It is from this that the question arises as to whether the development of economic co-operation between socialist countries, their more comprehensive economic integration, is compatible with the preservation of their national sovereignty, their independence.

For better understanding, let us examine the es-

sence of the economic integration of the socialist countries and how it relates to the national interests of the separate countries, to their sovereignty.

Socialist economic integration is a conscious and deliberate many-sided process, involving the growing convergence, interlocking and restructuring of national economic structures towards creating an integral socio-economic entity. This process develops in full conformity with the fundamental national interests of each of the fraternal countries and the internationalist interests of the entire socialist community. This major condition of the extension of the shifts towards integration is recorded in the *Comprehensive Programme for the Further Extension and Improvement of Cooperation and the Development of Socialist Economic Integration by the CMEA Member Countries* (1971).

These are: Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the USSR and Vietnam. Concerning the political aspects of the economic integration of the socialist countries, it is very important to pay attention to the circumstances in which the economic cooperation between and integration of the socialist countries unfolds, as well as to take into account the content of their state sovereignty and the ways of strengthening their national independence.

First of all, let us stress once again that the current technological revolution is a new stage in the internationalisation of production, in the extension of world economic relations.

Since no socialist country can, without harming its own national interests, exclude itself from the growing *world economic relations*, it is inevitably

faced by this *political* question: In what direction, with what countries and how should it develop its foreign economic co-operation?

The answer to this question is clear to all socialist countries guided by scientific ideology. The interests of every socialist country, its stronger national sovereignty and independence, are served best of all by planned, long-range development of mutually advantageous economic co-operation with other socialist countries and by objectively necessary socialist economic integration. This, of course, does not cancel mutually advantageous relations with the non-socialist world as well, from which the socialist countries can buy engineering products, new technology and other goods they may need. Still, to each socialist country, its growing economic ties with other countries have a fundamentally different social content, depending on whether they are maintained with socialist or with capitalist countries. This fundamental difference lies in the fact that a socialist country's growing reciprocal economic dependence—to say nothing of unilateral economic dependence—on a capitalist country is fraught with danger for the former's national independence. A graphic illustration of this is Poland, whose enormous debt to capitalist countries put it, in 1980-82, in a very difficult situation and was used as a means of pressure on it by the capitalist countries. At the same time, greater economic inter-dependence among the socialist countries themselves has no such latent danger.

The ideologists of the bourgeoisie, who would apply their accustomed capitalist yardstick to the socialist world, have always depicted the social-

ist community as a conglomeration of "hegemonic states" and "satellite states" and the association of the CMEA member countries as a hierarchy of "superiors" and "subordinates". Ever since integration was launched, these tags have been the stock-in-trade of every bourgeois columnist and writer discussing its prospects. Without concurring on every particular, they are unanimous on the main point, namely, that the economic integration of the CMEA countries generally cannot be based on strict observance of the principles of free choice, national sovereignty and independence.

Even at the start of the fraternal countries' economic co-operation which paved the way for their subsequent economic integration, some bourgeois pundits alleged that the division of labour and economic co-operation between socialist countries, and so on, were simply the means employed by the USSR to subordinate these countries. They wrote at that time: "The Soviet Union leaves no stone unturned which can help it to bind to itself and economically unite the satellite countries" (cf., for example, *Der Monat*, 1967, June, No. 225, pp. 16-25). Also at that time, it was claimed that the Soviet Union sought to establish economic in place of political influence, that the "Soviet Union is steering CMEA towards supranational planning which will lead to a federation of the states, removing the danger of their political and economic insubordination to Moscow" (cf., Istvan Agoston, *Le marché commun communiste. Principes pratiques du Comecon*, 1965).

Some bourgeois writers argued that greater economic inter-dependence demanded the removal of

national sovereignty, rather than its preservation, and criticised the socialist countries for trying to perpetuate it. It was claimed that while the West European countries were in the process of overcoming national sovereignty, the countries of Eastern Europe were marking time and moving in the opposite direction. Moreover, the French sociologist I. Agoston, in his *The Communist Common Market*, openly attacked the "introduction of sovereign parity as the basic principle of the Council" (i.e. CMEA—A.B.). He wrote of the Soviet Union's "supremacy" in the system of economic integration. Depicting the economic potential of the USSR and its contribution to the development of the economic co-operation and integration of the socialist countries as the main threat to the national sovereignty of other countries, I. Agoston wrote: "The process of integration, at which CMEA is directed, will thus result in stronger Soviet hegemony with relation to the countries of Eastern Europe and in the establishment of political and organisational unity. It appears, therefore, that in such conditions the 'equal sovereignty' of member countries, put forward as the fundamental principle of co-operation, is merely relative in practice." (Istvan Agoston, *Op. cit.*)

Subsequently, and to this day, the thesis of the economic integration of the socialist countries being incompatible with the preservation of their national sovereignty has become the keynote of the bourgeois interpretations of relations within CMEA.

Today, even more than before, Marxists are saddled with the concept of "limited sovereignty", "truncated independence", which allegedly charac-

terises their idea of the problems of the sovereignty and independence of countries within the framework of socialist economic integration. In repudiating this slander, it would, at the same time, be wrong not to see that the opponents of socialism take advantage of the fact that these problems are not sufficiently well worked out in Marxist literature, turning to account the inaccuracies and mistakes found in some Marxist writings on these problems, which they make out to be Marxism itself.

Therefore, it has to be stressed once again that Marxist-Leninists hold—and have seen it corroborated in practice—that socialist integration implies no regression in the political life of the socialist countries. On the contrary, it is the basis of their further all-round progress. It goes without saying that new stages in economic development, the extension of specialisation and co-operation among the socialist countries, fresh advances in the integration process, determine corresponding progressive changes also in the political sphere, presenting in a new way a number of problems related to the further development and forms of national sovereignty.

National sovereignty is a major democratic principle of social development. Every nation and nationality has the indisputable right to choose its socio-economic system and administer it, to deal independently with all problems of its home and foreign policy. Denying—whether fully or in part—this right to a nation, is an anti-democratic act, tantamount to making it a dependent, oppressed nation.

Recognition of these basic theses of Marxism-

Leninism does not yet answer the question: do the content of national sovereignty and the forms of exercising it always remain unchanged, is *national* and *state* sovereignty one and the same thing, and what changes occur in this respect in conditions of the growing inter-dependence of nations?

The development of socialist economic integration is indeed a process characterised by nations' greater inter-dependence and closer relationship. Viewed in the long term, socialist integration means the growing convergence and interlocking of the economic and political structures of the countries being integrated, which implies the establishment of *inter-state* associations and institutions which make recommendations or decisions for the purpose of speeding integration.

It is on this new question, concerned with increasing the importance of the inter-governmental integration bodies and suggesting that it might be better for CMEA bodies to take binding decisions, as well as offering recommendations, that the mistaken idea is sometimes voiced that integration calls for a certain limitation of national sovereignty. Those in support of this idea claim that with the advance of social progress there will emerge forms of socialist integration where the member countries will, freely and in conformity with the tasks they have assumed, limit their sovereignty and yield a part of their sovereign rights to the joint body, retaining their independence and sovereignty in other fields. And this process, it is said, will go on extending.

However plausible this reasoning may appear, it is, nevertheless, quite wrong to think that the progress of socialist integration calls for a grad-

ual limitation of national (state) sovereignty, for this is not so at all.

This kind of approach assumes that the countries advancing towards communism through socialist integration have to sacrifice their national sovereignty bit by bit, and that the farther the integration goes, the more national sovereignty will be limited (until it completely disappears). This picture of progress as a movement entailing the curtailment of nations' independence and sovereignty, rather than providing for the consolidation of the latter and for the flourishing of the rights and freedoms of nations, does not correspond to the real essence of the development of these nations and countries.

This approach ignores the historical evolution of the content of national sovereignty and of the forms of exercising it. The concepts of national and state sovereignty are confused. More than this, the fact that some forms exhaust themselves and other forms develop is represented as the limitation and abolition of sovereignty as such.

Bourgeois ideologists exploit in every way such discourses, sometimes to be found in scholarly literature. They claim that the repeated official statements that socialist integration is being developed, and will be developed further, with national sovereignty being fully preserved, are mere declarations. These ideologists seek to show that Marxist-Leninists in practice embrace the theory of limited sovereignty. These assertions have no foundation in fact. They are made by people who mechanically apply the principles of capitalist integration to the socialist world and utilise some

writers' inaccurate and erroneous statements.

Actually, the development of socialist integration does not run counter to the preservation of a nation's full rights, its unrestricted right to determine its own destiny. The development of integration involves a change in the *content and the forms of the exercise* of sovereign rights, involving no limitation of the *scope* of these rights. It is very important here to understand the dialectics of national and state sovereignty.

The substance of the matter is this. Taking the path of socialist integration, which at certain stages can indeed call for not only recommendations but also binding decisions on a given problem of common economic development, every country concerned retains all its rights. A part of these rights (by far the greater part at first) are exercised just as they were previously exercised. Each country and people, through its government and at its own discretion, plans the development of its economy, the main proportions of the economy, and so on. But the other part of the rights, related to ensuring the successful development of the integration processes, is exercised, also by the government of each country, in a new way—by adopting joint, collective decisions with the governments (or government representatives) of the other countries.

It may, for instance, seem that, if the government of one of the countries deposits in the Investment Bank a sum of a hundred million roubles, there is a limitation of national sovereignty, as the future of this portion of the national funds is determined not by that country, but by all countries together.

To infer this would, however, be wrong for two reasons. Firstly, this country is not barred from taking part in the decision, it will simply not make it on its own, but jointly with the other countries. Secondly, exactly to the extent it loses its ability to determine on its own the future of the funds in has contributed, allowing, say, seven other countries to determine it together with it, it gains, to the same proportion, the ability to manage the funds contributed by the other seven. Hence, its rights are not a whit limited, they remain the same and are even extended. The situation does not change either when the decision-making procedure varies, e.g. when decisions are passed by a unanimous vote or when they are passed by a majority vote.

Thus, a nation's sovereign rights are exercised in two forms. They are exercised individually, where integration is not concerned, and collectively, where integration is involved. Nevertheless, sovereign rights, national sovereignty, are not limited, whatever the correlation of these two forms. It is also worth noting that as the result of the pooling of the efforts of several countries, of their co-operation, each country is enabled to deal with matters such as it could not cope with on its own.

In looking at all these matters, one should clearly understand the fact that the notions of state and national sovereignty are *not identical*. National sovereignty, as the inalienable right of every nation to pursue its vital interests, to determine its own destiny, is not identical to state sovereignty. The latter is the form in which national sovereignty is realised. And national sovereignty is inalienable from the fundamental rights

of any people, even if it cannot, for some reason, realise it in the form of state sovereignty. In multinational socialist states—e.g. the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia—every nation retains its full national sovereignty. But a part of it is realised through national-republic state forms, and another, through the public bodies of the whole Union (as in the USSR) or the public bodies of the whole country (as in Czechoslovakia). It means that the new, poly-governmental form of the realisation of sovereignty, which may emerge in the course of socialist integration, can by no means affect the fullness of national sovereignty.

Such is the actual relation between socialist integration and national sovereignty.

How should one assess the coexistence of capitalism and socialism in the world today, how profound and lasting is the conflict between them, and is their reconciliation possible in the future?

The modern world is not all alike. It is comprised of countries with widely different socio-economic and political systems—the African countries, which were but recently organised on tribal lines, countries like Nepal and Saudi Arabia, where the feudal way of life still persists, capitalist countries and socialist countries. But for all this diversity of socio-economic, and even more of political, structures, the main reality of the modern world is the coexistence in it of capitalist and socialist countries, coexistence which does not cancel the conflict between capitalism and socialism.

The fact that capitalism and socialism coexist in the modern world, the struggle between them, and the prospects of their coexistence are understood and assessed differently by Communists and by bourgeois ideologists.

Communists, guided by Marxism-Leninism, hold—as they have always held—that social progress consists in passing from less to more perfect forms of society, that the replacement of primitive communal system by class society (slavery, feudalism and capitalism) was as natural as is the current replacement of capitalism by socialism (it is exactly this still unfinished revolutionary replacement that has given rise to the present coexistence of socialism and capitalism). Bourgeois ideologists, on the other hand, have asserted even since the beginning of this century, and they still assert that the emergence and development of socialism is a zigzag in the “normal” development of history, and that the coexistence of capitalism with it is temporary. Sooner or later, in one way or another, the principles of private enterprise will again triumph throughout the world.

An examination of the essence of the main conflict of the present—the conflict between socialism and capitalism—makes especially obvious the inability of bourgeois ideology to judge facts more or less soberly. This is due to the fact that the objective contradiction between the exploiters’ social aims and the real course of history, between the class aim of the bourgeoisie and real life is especially strongly felt here.

Some time ago, the bourgeoisie was historically a rising class. For this reason, its interests largely concurred with the demands of social progress

and lay along its general course. This made it objectively possible for the bourgeoisie's special aims to be represented as the aim of history itself. Now that social progress is in conflict with the bourgeoisie's social aims, the sole means of "matching" its egoistic class aims with the course of history is found in falsifying the essence of social progress, refusing to acknowledge the natural and logical character of its actual results. Therefore, if the earlier bourgeois concepts of social development, although they failed to pass the test for scientific validity, did nevertheless contain some kernels of truth, in our time these concepts become increasingly militant in their anti-scientific nature and the once inconsistently progressive views degenerate into views that are consistently reactionary.

What, then, are the specific expressions, in this case, of the anti-scientific and reactionary nature of the bourgeois views?

Speaking of the *theoretical* level of the bourgeois views, the following must be noted. The isolation of the bourgeois ideal from the course of social development and its transformation into an arbitrarily created ideological postulate heightens the anti-scientific approach to the current social struggles, making objective analysis absolutely impossible, and causing particularly persistent attempts to represent the main conflict of the present as an ideological conflict, as a global clash between two "aims".

It takes no exceptional perspicacity to be able to see in these anti-communist bourgeois conceptions the expression of the class aims of the contemporary imperialist bourgeoisie. Nor, inciden-

tally, do the bourgeois ideologists themselves conceal it, usually saying that the Communists, when they speak of the coming general replacement of capitalism by socialism, also formulate their particular aims. Giving the appearance of "equivalence" to two diametrically opposite world views is no harmless delusion. It helps to distract attention from the main thing—from finding out the basis of each "aim" and how far each one of them corresponds to the objective march of history.

It is not fortuitous that all bourgeois concepts of the coexistence of capitalism and socialism proceed from the assumption that the establishment and development of socialism are not the product of the natural march of history, and are merely the result of implementing a specific ideology and policy, and that the conflict between socialism and capitalism on a world scale is not an objective result of capitalism's inherent antagonism between the social character of production and private capitalist appropriation, between the working class and the bourgeoisie, but merely the consequence of ideological conflict.

With such an inverted picture of reality, when material processes are said to be the product of ideological processes, when the effect is represented as the cause and vice versa, the future of the coexistence of socialism and capitalism is claimed to be dependent not on the action of intrinsic objective features, but on a more or less successful ideological struggle, a more or less adroit foreign policy or a given manipulation of the military and political forces in the world. Accordingly, all the bourgeois fears for the outcome of

the conflict between socialism and capitalism, when, as happens but seldom, they do not serve as a hypocritical cover for militant aggressiveness, boil down to apprehension lest the communist ideologists and politicians should prove more cunning than their bourgeois opposite numbers and the Communists should succeed in lulling the captains of the capitalist world into a false sense of security, achieve a superiority in force, both military and political, and thus establish their world supremacy.

So much for the theoretical level of the concepts of present-day anti-communism.

If, on the other hand, we assess the *socio-political* meaning of its concepts of the coexistence of socialism and capitalism, it is strikingly obvious that the deepening gulf between the bourgeois ideal and society's development leads to the steady extension of the areas of social life where progress is hindered by the bourgeoisie, and hindered all the more persistently, the less opportunity is left to it for doing so. This is the very reason why bourgeois ideology is becoming more and more reactionary and the bourgeoisie's political adventurism is growing.

Indeed, before the emergence of socialism, bourgeois ideology, defending the interests of the bourgeoisie and pretending that its were the general aims, came into conflict with the real interests of the masses, fought the revolutionary movement and its ideas, and tried to prevent the revolutionary establishment of the new order of things. Now, when social progress has been made in the world socialist system, bourgeois ideology does not simply hinder progressive development, but is

spearheaded against the changes already accomplished, trying to turn the clock of history back.

In line with the concept of the main conflict of the present being a conflict between two "aims", bourgeois politicians see the purpose of their activity as making no "miscalculation" in coexistence with socialism, providing for superior force in military and political terms, and so straightening the "zigzag" that history has made.

Briefly, the growing divergence between the bourgeois aims and the objective course of history comes through in the growing anti-scientific nature of the bourgeois concepts, which declare the intentions, will and strength of the ruling class to be the main basis of social development. But will and strength, detached from their objective roots, become the starting-point of ideological and political adventurism, directed today against social progress as a whole, against the fundamental interests of mankind.

In contrast to bourgeois ideology, Marxism regards the coexistence of socialism and capitalism as an *inevitable and protracted period of human history*. The reason is not that the working class is more "tolerant" of capitalism than the bourgeoisie is of socialism. At first glance, it may seem strange that Communists, who fight the exploitation of man by man, should consider the coexistence of socialism and capitalism historically inevitable and say that it is historically necessary for countries with different social systems to coexist peacefully. The reason for this apparent discrepancy lies in the fact that Communists do not found their views on class hatred, moral censure

or good intentions, but on a scientific concept of the course of social progress.

Proceeding from a materialist concept of history, they believe that the conflict between socialism and capitalism is not just an ideological conflict but, above all, an objective contradiction of the natural evolution of society. The outcome of the conflict depends primarily on the course of socio-economic development, not on politics. The choice between capitalism and socialism, their coexistence and the replacement of one social system by the other do not depend simply on the wishes of a given social class, but are mainly determined by the operation of the objective laws governing social progress.

Accordingly, when analysing the actual relationships between socialism and capitalism, *two problems*, closely related but nevertheless different, should be clearly distinguished. These are the problem of the *coexistence* of socialism and capitalism and the problem of the *peaceful coexistence* of the socialist and the capitalist countries. Dissimilar processes underlie each of these problems. Whereas the coexistence of socialism and capitalism depends on the operation of objective laws which are independent of people's will and intentions, the peaceful coexistence of the socialist and the capitalist countries rests on a definite balance of international forces, which directly depends on will and intentions, on the actual policies of real people.

Since we are concerned in the present instance with the "strategic" aspect of the relationships between socialism and capitalism, with the overall prospects for the development of these rela-

tionships, rather than their specific forms, we shall here dwell only on the first-mentioned problem.

The concept of the coexistence of socialism and capitalism is a part of the general sociological concept of the ways whereby one socio-economic formation is superseded by another or, more precisely, it is a part of the general theory of the world socialist revolution, of the ways of its development. The main contours of this concept were defined already in the scientific works of Marx and Engels. Its more detailed elaboration and further development belong to Lenin and his followers.

According to Marxism-Leninism, the coexistence of socialism and capitalism is an objectively determined, historically inevitable social condition connected with the revolutionary transition from the capitalist to the communist socio-economic formation. The pre-socialist world of private ownership, exploitation and oppression is not an integral whole. It is divided into a number of national-state formations, with their economy, socio-class structure and political organisation, alignment of the class forces and traditions. Naturally, the revolutionary transformation into socialism of the entire world of private ownership, exploitation and oppression could under no conditions be carried out simultaneously, as an action unfolding at the same moment all through the world. In the works of the founders of scientific communism, we can trace, in one form or another, the idea that between the universal supremacy of capital and the universal triumph of socialism there lies a historical period of the revolutionary replacement of the former by the latter.

The coexistence of socialism and capitalism is *historically inevitable*, it is the result of the operation of objective laws, a consequence of the fact that social life develops in national-state forms. The uneven economic and political development of capitalism has determined the uneven maturing of the socialist revolution in different countries, their transition to socialism at different times. Countries which are still capitalist or pre-capitalist and countries which have already embarked on building socialism and communism exist simultaneously. That is what makes the coexistence of capitalism and socialism historically inevitable.

Is it true that the Communists' appeal for peaceful coexistence is a tactical ruse?

This is not a casual question. Bourgeois propaganda long ago created and widely spread, through the mass media, the myth that the Communists' appeal to the leaders of the capitalist states to promote peaceful relations, peaceful coexistence with the socialist countries, is nothing more than a trick designed to dull the vigilance of the leaders of the capitalist world, for Communists have far from given up the idea of the universal triumph of communism.

It is true that the Communists have not given up their conviction that sooner or later all countries of the world will follow the path to socialism and communism. For all that, the slogan of the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems is not—nor has it ever been—a tactical ruse. It is a strategic fundamental principle, a strategic line,

The changed relation of forces in the world has gradually compelled bourgeois ideologists to accept the truth that capitalism is no longer all-powerful in influencing world developments. They have had to admit that unleashing thermonuclear war amounts to suicide. It is the realisation of this fact that makes many bourgeois leaders to recognise the need for the peaceful coexistence of socialism and capitalism. But this realistic approach is unacceptable to the "hawks". They defend in every way their thesis that normal, peaceful relations are impossible between countries with different social systems. This point of view is usually founded on two arguments. The first of them is that capitalism and socialism are mutually exclusive, irreconcilable social structures, and that any peaceful settlement of controversial issues between them is unrealistic. The second is that the peaceful coexistence of socialist and capitalist countries is a trick devised by the Communists to lull their opponents' fears.

Neither argument has a leg to stand on.

That capitalism and socialism are mutually exclusive social structures is plain enough, but from this it does not follow at all that it is impossible for countries with different, and even with diametrically opposite, social systems to maintain normal political and economic relations based on the principles of durable peace and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs. After all, the transformation of one social system into the other develops within national-state boundaries and is the result, above all, of the internal development of a country. This process by itself does not pose any immediate threat to the social

system in any of the neighbouring capitalist states, and mutually advantageous relations between socialist and capitalist countries do not in any way undermine the foundations of either capitalism or socialism.

It goes without saying that progressive reforms carried out in a country have a revolutionising influence on working people in other capitalist countries, but this influence by itself does not settle the destiny of capitalism, any more than the influence of the capitalist countries on the socialist rules out peaceful inter-governmental relations between them.

As for the allegation that the slogan of peaceful coexistence is a communist stratagem, as Communists do not believe in perpetual coexistence anyway, this is a mixture of deliberate falsification and plain confusion. First of all, what Communists consider to be temporary is not the *peaceful* coexistence of socialist and capitalist countries, but generally the *coexistence* of socialism and capitalism. The fact that coexistence must, sooner or later, inevitably cease derives from the progress of history which tends towards the general revolutionary replacement of capitalism by socialism. In other words, this must happen not because the Communists want it to, but by virtue of the laws of history, and seeing it as a communist stratagem is as foolish as blaming bad weather on the weather centre.

The principle of peaceful coexistence, propounded by Communists, is ultimately clear and straightforward: they hold that throughout the time of the coexistence of socialism and capitalism

there must be peace between the socialist and the capitalist countries.

Are peaceful coexistence and international detente one and the same thing?

No, they are not, even though they are closely linked with each other.

The peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems is not an objective social law but merely *one of two possible ways, peaceful or non-peaceful*, of coexistence. The peaceful way has now become a historical necessity.

The question of ways of coexistence was posed already by Lenin, who provided the theoretical grounds for the historical inevitability of the coexistence of one or more socialist countries with neighbouring developed imperialist countries. Lenin's prediction has been borne out by practice, which has made the problem of the forms of the relations between socialist and imperialist states one of the central problems of the international development of socialism.

In his works, written when the Soviet Union was encircled by capitalist countries, Lenin strictly differentiated *three distinct aspects* of this problem, namely, the possible forms of the relations between a socialist state and imperialist states; the forms needed by the socialist state; and the feasibility of relationships preferable to socialism.

Lenin believed—and the position has not changed today—that so long as socialist and imperialist states coexist there may be two main forms of relations between them—war or peace, peaceful or non-peaceful coexistence. Underlining the

historical inevitability of the coexistence of socialist and capitalist countries, Lenin also said that peace between them was not predetermined, that so long as the Soviet Republic was hemmed in by imperialist powers, there was no guarantee of durable peace between that socialist country and the imperialist states, and that the threat to peace came from imperialism.

Nevertheless, even in that situation Lenin showed that, for all the dangers latent in imperialism's policy, the sole policy matching the fundamental interests of socialism, the interests of all working people, was the policy of the peaceful coexistence of the socialist country and the capitalist countries, the policy of preserving peace among nations. This policy is far from being an *ad hoc* principle advanced by socialism under the impact of the correlation of forces prevailing in the world at the moment, as the anti-Communists assert. It is a policy which stems from the fact that the implementation of the communist ideals in any given country and in the world at large not only does not need war between the socialist and the imperialist states, but is, on the contrary, complicated and held back by war.

When he spoke of two possible forms of the coexistence of the socialist and the capitalist countries, stressing socialism's constant preference for the peaceful way of coexistence of countries with opposite forms of ownership, Lenin, as a sober politician, did not confine himself to the theoretical treatment of the question but examined in detail the specific ways of developing international relations and studied the possible ways of implementing the policy of peaceful coexistence of

countries with different social systems. Standing out in all Lenin's works is the idea that the destinies of peace, of the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems, depend most directly on the correlation of socio-economic and socio-political forces.

Early under Soviet rule, in Lenin's lifetime, wars, including world wars, were still inevitable, and the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems had not yet emerged as a historical necessity. When the Soviet Union was encircled by the capitalist countries, its policy of peaceful coexistence with capitalism could not provide for permanent peace, it could only offer a temporary respite from war, as international relations were still predominantly influenced by imperialism. That made wars unavoidable, and made it inevitable that peaceful coexistence must cease when the imperialist states attacked the Soviet Union.

The rout of the striking forces of imperialism, of German and Italian fascism and Japanese militarism in the Second World War; the decisive contribution made by the Soviet Union to their defeat; the victorious socialist revolutions in some European and Asian countries; the emergence of socialism beyond the borders of one country and its growth into a world system radically altered the relation of forces in the world, thereby changing the solution of the war and peace issues.

The further weakening of imperialism's positions, caused by the aggravation of its internal contradictions and the collapse of the colonial system, the steady growth of the forces of socialism, the mounting national-liberation struggle,

the increasing revolutionary workers' movement in the capitalist countries, and the sweeping world movement for a lasting peace have all dislodged imperialism from its dominant position in international relations, thus making another world war inevitable no longer.

Moreover, the appearance and accumulation of nuclear missiles have radically altered the character of any future world war. Continuing to be by its *origin* an issue of imperialism and a continuation of its aggressive policy, this war in its *results* (if nuclear arms are used by both world systems) stops being a means of carrying out policy, for it becomes not only a means of suicide for capitalism, but also a means of destroying the most important material conditions of social progress.

These are the circumstances which now make the peaceful coexistence of the socialist and the capitalist countries a historical necessity.

Yet the *historical necessity* of the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems is not something *historically inevitable*, it is not an objective law. Peaceful coexistence today is merely one of two possible forms of the coexistence of capitalist and socialist countries. Historical necessity and historical inevitability do not conform to the objective law in the same way. That which is natural is necessary and inevitable. But not everything which is a historical necessity is inevitable and natural.

The fact that the peaceful coexistence of the socialist and the capitalist countries has become a historical necessity indicates the vast increase in the significance mankind attaches to universal

peace. This is predetermined by the accumulation of objective and subjective factors directing social development towards the maintenance of peace. But it does not in any way mean that the socio-economic conditions have emerged which make world wars impossible and universal peace secure and immutable.

The policy of peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems implies a constructive programme of relationships between countries belonging to either world system. Needless to say, the prime consideration in peaceful coexistence is the exclusion of war as an instrument of policy. But peaceful coexistence takes more than just that and so cannot be identified with a period of "military balance" or "balance of fear", as anti-Communists allege. The policy of peaceful coexistence is a system of measures which, besides safeguarding peace, provide for a gradual elimination from international relations of elements fraught with the immediate threat of war.

These measures consist primarily in the strict observance of the main principles of peaceful coexistence by all countries, cessation of the arms race, and gradual disarmament under control.

It is quite obvious that the non-observance of the main principles of peaceful coexistence, such as the exclusion of war as an instrument of policy, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, and so on, poses an immediate threat of military conflict between countries. It is especially worth noting that the observance of these principles is obligatory not only in relations bet-

ween the Soviet Union and the United States, the most powerful countries in the two world systems, but in relations between other countries, for peace is indivisible.

The most important means of strengthening peace is the cessation of the arms race and the implementation of measures for disarmament under control. As long as peace continues to hinge on the arms race and "military balance", the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems will be brittle and insecure. Nothing but the abolition of the major means of warfare—the prohibition and destruction of nuclear missiles, the destruction of other kinds of weapons, and a reduction in armed forces—can significantly strengthen the cause of peace.

To repeat, the policy of peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems, pursued by the socialist states, is neither a tactical method nor a topical slogan, but a major constituent of the general line of the socialist countries' foreign policy.

The general line of the socialist countries' foreign policy is to ensure the best possible international conditions for consolidating and promoting the positions of socialism and communism. The attitude towards the bourgeois states is only one of the aspects of the general foreign policy of a socialist country. The policy of peaceful coexistence pursued by a socialist country cannot be identified with the *entire* general line of its foreign policy. The general line of a socialist country's foreign policy comprises the policy of socialist internationalism towards peoples and countries building socialism (inter-governmental relations in the world

socialist system also presuppose the observance of the principles of peaceful coexistence); the policy of proletarian internationalism towards the working people of developing countries (the character of their government policies determines the attitude to them of the socialist state, and here relations may be close to socialist internationalism—e.g. relations with Angola and Ethiopia); the policy of proletarian internationalism towards the working class and working people of advanced capitalist countries; and the policy of peaceful coexistence with the imperialist states.

Pursuing the policy of peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems, the Communists of the socialist states do not renounce their class aims.

Such is the sum and substance of the policy of peaceful coexistence for which the socialist countries are working.

International detente is a process of restructuring international relations between countries with different social systems, which results in passing from cold war relations and principles to the observance of the principles of peaceful coexistence. In other words, international detente is the *condition*, the *prerequisite* for stable relations of peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems.

While Communists are for the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems, they insist at the same time on socialism's uncompromising ideological struggle against capitalism. Does this mean that they support cold war?

Most emphatically it does not. The Communists have always been and remain against cold as well

as hot war. It is the anti-Communists who most often interpret peaceful relations between the capitalist and the socialist countries as cold war. For them, during cold war a struggle is being waged between the competing ideological doctrines, each of them seeking to secure conditions for its own world supremacy by every means.

That is why anti-Communists do not, as a rule, see any essential difference between the notions of peaceful coexistence, cold war, ideological struggle, a war of nerves, psychological war, and so forth. These are, in their view, merely synonymous notions descriptive of the irreconcilable struggle between two systems that has been going on ever since the 1917 October Socialist Revolution in Russia. Yet, depending on the specific socio-political position taken by a given bourgeois ideologist, the essence and role of cold war in the current conflict are interpreted in more ways than one.

To the more reactionary section of the imperialist bourgeoisie, who draw inspiration from "hawk" ideology and adhere to a "tough" course with the prospect of a "limited" nuclear war or a global nuclear missile conflict, cold war is a means of building up international tension. Even before the beginning of detente, i.e. before the 1970s, the "hawks" had been giving every support to cold war which they saw as a major element of their policy. According to L. Schulte, a West German political writer, the war of nerves was and remains a preliminary to a military conflict. In its logical development, this is a policy of turning cold into hot war, by which the extremist aggressive sections of the imperialist bourgeoisie expect to turn

back the clock of history and achieve "total victory" over communism.

To the moderate wing of the imperialist bourgeoisie who take a common sense attitude, cold war should not be allowed to develop into hot war, but must continue as an instrument of accomplishing imperialist ends in the context of peace. Unlike the extremists, the moderates hope that the present situation will at least not change for the worse, i.e. that the cold war will continue without developing into an open confrontation which could lead mankind to destruction. Without in any way giving up the arms race and the build-up of the so-called "forces of deterrence", this portion of the imperialist bourgeoisie expect, by cleverly combining the non-military cold war methods with local wars, to halt the progress of history and bring the peoples of the socialist countries back to the capitalist fold.

In other words, rather than run the risk of a nuclear war, these sections of the capitalist world would try other means of achieving their imperialist ends. Alongside military blackmail and local wars, prominent among these means are ideological struggle, sabotage, intimidation, and so on, which is what they call cold war. Thus, both some of the "hawks" and some of the "moderates", who today do not want a world nuclear conflict, interpret the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems as an inevitable cold war for world supremacy.

These advocates of capitalism usually reason in this way. In the 20th century, in order to avoid nuclear destruction, the two worlds have to co-exist. This coexistence, however, cannot be peace-

ful in anything like the true sense, as communism is "subversive" by nature, which makes cold war inevitable. The present Reagan Administration, which is reviving cold war, calls the national liberation movement and the emancipation struggle "terrorism".

What, then, is cold war? It is the total of all the means and methods of struggle for world hegemony, with the exception of nuclear confrontation. It implies the arms race, local wars, political and ideological sabotage, military blackmail, economic sanctions, lies and slander, all that, in a word, which breeds international tension, all that bourgeois ideologists believe can exert pressure on communism.

It goes without saying that ideological struggle is considered one of the chief weapons of cold war. Here it is especially worth noting that while they acknowledge the paramount role of the ideological struggle between capitalism and socialism, most bourgeois ideologists do not regard it as a reflection of the class positions of the contending social forces. It is to them a major weapon in the struggle for world hegemony, as they invest ideological struggle with an imperialist content.

To give this concept a semblance of truth, the anti-Communists carry out a double operation. On the one hand, they represent the natural consolidation of the international positions of socialism as a result of the intrigues of "red imperialism". For this purpose, they interpret the Communists' conclusion about the inevitable replacement of capitalism by socialism as "Communist imperialism". Thus William Fulbright wrote at

one time that the Soviet Union was dedicated to the "imposition on an unwilling world of its own form of totalitarian society". (*Prospects for the West*, Cambridge, 1963, p. 14.) On the other hand, anti-Communists represent their real imperialism, their counter-revolutionary struggle against the masses' choice in favour of communism, as a struggle against foreign imperialism. Fulbright, again, wrote that "it is not Communism which is at issue between the Soviet Union and the West but Communist imperialism." (*Ibid.*, p. 20.)

As we see, the ideologists of the monopoly bourgeoisie describe as imperialism not a specific set of socio-economic relations and the policy deriving from them but a social doctrine (in this instance, the Marxist thesis concerning the inevitability of the triumph of communism the world over).

This hocus-pocus clearly demonstrates the fallaciousness of bourgeois reasoning. Viewed from this standpoint, the course of history is not the changing of the material foundations of social life but a struggle between two ideological conceptions, the communist and the bourgeois. This approach helps bourgeois ideologists to achieve at least three ends.

Firstly, from these positions it is easy to falsify the struggle between progress and reaction, between peace and aggression. Indeed, if the course of history is determined by the battle of opposite ideological conceptions, it is not difficult to persuade the man in the street that communist ideology, which provides grounds for changing the social foundations of the world, is "aggressive" and "imperialist". And that bourgeois ideology and

policy, which are out to defend and perpetuate capitalism, are protective and peace-loving.

Secondly, from these positions it is easy to explain and justify government persecution of non-conformists in capitalist countries. After all, if the Communists' ideological doctrine itself is subversive and imperialist, then the system of repression at home and continual interference in other countries' internal affairs can be easily disguised as "security measures".

Thirdly, and this is especially important to the bourgeoisie, when one looks at things this way, it is not hard to find reasons for quiescence. If social development is determined by arbitrarily formulated ideas, then social evolution depends not on socio-economic conditions or the material contradictions of social life but on clever propaganda, on knowing how to instil particular ideas in the masses, on the capacity to bludgeon the masses into feeling as required. It depends, finally, on the strategy and tactics of "psychological" and cold war.

It is precisely in this direction that the recommendations of the more vulgar advocates of capitalism tend. In their opinion, all methods of influence, not stopping short of lies, distortions and provocations, should be brought to bear so as to obtain the desired results in the struggle against communist ideology.

It is plain that the bourgeois interpretation of peaceful coexistence as cold war and of the battle of ideas as a means of winning world supremacy, has nothing in common with the actual interests of peace, stable neighbourly relations between

peoples or ideological struggle in the scientific, Marxist sense.

The democratic concept of peaceful coexistence held by Communists and the imperialist concept of cold war are not identical but are, in fact, in direct contradiction with each other, which reflects the divergent positions of the working class and the bourgeoisie, but as well as of the masses of the people and the handful of the imperialists.

The principle of peaceful coexistence implies the demand not only for peace, but also for a whole range of measures to guarantee a lasting peace and improve the international climate. Here belong measures to halt the arms race and begin phased disarmament, to stop the local wars unleashed by the imperialists, to put an end to military blackmail and the war psychosis, to promote international trade and cultural contacts, and so on. All these measures have a general democratic character and are fully acceptable to capitalism, too. Therefore, when Communists ask bourgeois governments to effect them, they do not expect the captains of the capitalist world to set about abolishing their own social system. Implementation of these measures would improve the international climate and make conditions more favourable for social progress.

Thus, the true peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems is far from being equivalent to cold war. Peaceful coexistence is a constructive programme for promoting all-round international relations between different countries. The purpose of this programme is to rule out mil-

itary conflicts and direct the historically inevitable struggle between socialism and capitalism into the channels of economic competition and ideological debate on the qualities of the two social systems, capitalism and socialism.

Анатолий Бугенко

ТЕОРИЯ И ПРАКТИКА РЕАЛЬНОГО СОЦИАЛИЗМА:

вопросы и ответы

на английском языке

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Anatoli Butenko

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THEORY AND PRACTICE OF REAL SOCIALISM



Anatoli BUTENKO, Doctor of Philosophy, was born in 1923. A graduate of Moscow University, he is currently a department head at the Institute of Economics of the World Socialist System. Dr. Butenko specialises in the problems of theory and practice of the socialist formation. His books on the subjects include *Socialism as a Social System*, *Political Organisation of Society under Socialism* and *The Socialist Way of Life: Problems and Judgements*.

